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SIR MICHAEL SADLER

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TO THE READER.

THE writer of the following story has pursued the same plan she adopted in that of THEODORE, by interweaving the imaginary history of a young person living in those disastrous times, with the important and interesting detail of historic facts, which are never altered or perverted, either in time, place, or circumstance. Her intention is, by this means, to excite a laudable curiosity for works of History and Biography, which, it is presumed, will be read with more diligence, and recollected to better effect, when they are combined with that species of individual attachment awakened in a sensible

child towards a person of his own age, actuated by his own motives and affections. The author may also add, that she was desirous of impressing on the ardent and ductile mind of youth the value of that religious liberty, that peace and plenty, enjoyed in this favoured country, and thereby awakening a spirit of thankfulness to God and goodwill to man. It will be found that her scenes of distress are by no means exaggerated (since it was impossible to increase the horrors of the times depicted); and it will be evident to all parents, that she has ceased to relate the memoirs of Henry IV. at the happiest period.

TO MARY,

DAUGHTER OF GENERAL CHARLES AMADEE DE HARCOURT

MARQUIS DE HARCOURT,

&c. &c.

MY DEAR YOUNG LADY,

WITH the permission of your excellent parents, I present to you the story of a young person supposed to live in times of great historical importance, and whose personal sufferings and virtues may add interest, in the affectionate minds of early youth, to those events which ought to be deeply impressed on the mind and the memory. I solicit *your* especial attention to this story, because my little heroine in many

respects resembles yourself;—like you, she is the daughter of a French nobleman and an English lady—her parents, like yours, have suffered from those political tempests which were permitted, at a later period, again to desolate France; and your happiness, like hers, arises, in a considerable degree, from the restoration of peace to your paternal countries.

Beyond this the comparison ceases; for the misfortunes which fell upon your father's house have not affected you, and the courage, heroism, and patience practised by Adelaide, are, happily, not demanded in your situation. But, more nobly descended than her, living in times far more enlightened, and daily receiving from the best of parents those lessons which unite the precepts of Christianity with the accomplishments befitting your rank, you will readily perceive

that the virtues and attainments called for in *your* situation, are in fact more important than those *she* practised. You will be aware, that active benevolence, self-control, the dignity of a generous mind, the humility of a religious spirit, the gentle demeanour of courteous manners, the cheerfulness of a placid temper, are more endearing, as well as more feminine qualities, than the exertions of courage, or the endurances of fortitude, which yet, when called for, are perfectly compatible with them. In considering these subjects, you will turn your eyes upon that admirable mother, whose daily path through life exhibits them all; and you will be sensible of a love more pure, and an esteem more perfect, towards both your parents, than my poor Adelaide could possibly feel for those from whom she had been so long separated. You will look round on your

noble and amiable brothers—on the illustrious connections with which you are so eminently blessed (connections whose rank is dignified by their virtues),—and you will feel the full value of their example, and the sweetness and strength of those ties which incite you to follow it—and, *above all*, you will be especially grateful to your Heavenly Father for these rare and numerous blessings.

With sincere hopes and ardent desires that the promise of your early days may be realized in virtue and happiness,

I remain,

My dear young Lady,

Your very faithful servant,

B. HOFLAND.

November 28th, 1822.

ADELAIDE

CHAP. I.

You have long sowed in a field of flint, which could bring nothing forth but a crop of cares, and affliction of spirit.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH'S REMAINS.

IN the evening of the 24th of August, 1572, a young couple, whom the duties of a military life had separated for a considerable time, were glad to escape from the merriment and gaiety which reigned through the palace of the Louvre, where they were lodged, to a small apartment, where they could talk freely of their own affairs and those of the kingdom of France, and worship God in the manner their own religion dictated, as they were both of the Protestant,

or, as it was then called, the Huguenot persuasion.

Charles de Soubise was an officer in the service of the young King of Navarre, afterwards the celebrated Henry IV.: he was of a noble family, elegant person, and excellent disposition; and had been, from his infancy, distinguished by the Queen of Navarre, who had caused her son to bestow upon him every mark of favour in his power. He had married very early in life a young English girl, who, with an aged uncle, had taken refuge on the Continent during the persecution of the Protestants under Queen Mary of bloody memory: her father having suffered at the stake, and her mother died heart-broken for his cruel fate, poor little Maria Shirley was happy in having a relative, who, in providing for his own safety, did not forget the infant of his martyred nephew, although her age and her sex rendered her an inconvenient companion in his flight.

Maria could not remember her parents,

but their sad fate made a deep impression on her mind; and, together with the sincere and sacred veneration she felt for the religion in which she was educated, tended to render her uncomfortable in her present situation at Paris, since, amidst all its gaieties, she felt aware that she was in a land of enemies. The King of Navarre and his mother had a short time before arrived in Paris, for the purpose of celebrating the marriage of the former with Margaret of Valois, the sister of the King of France, Charles IX. The match was made by Catherine of Medicis, the Queen-mother, a woman who united all the graces of a Court to profound dissimulation and inherent cruelty; and our young couple justly feared that their amiable, generous, and gallant young Prince, who had not yet completed his nineteenth year, would be in some manner rendered the dupe of her artifices, or the victim to her designs, especially as her sons were all of delicate health, and, after them, he was the heir to the crown of France; and

she was aware, that, although she now governed in the name of her son, Henry would never submit to her empire.

These surmises were strengthened by the painful circumstances of the death of the Queen of Navarre, which happened after a short illness, said to be occasioned by the fatigue she had undergone in preparing for her son's nuptials; but Madame de Soubise, who was constant in her attendance on the person of her royal mistress, was convinced that her death was occasioned by the use of a poisoned pair of gloves*, which had been presented to her by a French nobleman. The Court was at this time wearing mourning for this melancholy circumstance; and such were the apparent testimonies of respect for her memory, that the young King and most of his followers believed Catherine and her son to be sincere in their demonstrations of grief, and among the rest De Soubise; but he vainly persuaded his young wife to that purpose. She had witnessed the sufferings, and received the last breath of her beloved

* See Sully, Brantome, and other historians.

Queen, and her heart still dwelt on its sorrows.

The conversation was interrupted at a late hour by the arrival of their only child, Adelaide de Soubise, who entered with such an air of joy in her features, such a fulness of gaiety and beauty in her countenance, that it was scarcely possible to look at her without sharing in that pleasure which animated all her gestures. The child was at this time in her seventh year, and united in her person and manners all the most striking characteristics of the two countries to which she owed her birth. She had the delicate fairness and soft smile of her mother, with the dark brilliant eye, and vivacity of expression possessed by her father. As she had till now lived entirely in the country, and been educated by her mother with great care, she spoke the English tongue with a purity seldom met with; and as she was too young to share the troubles, or understand the cares, which agitated those by whom she was surrounded, her natural archness, wit, and hilarity, displayed itself in the most engaging

manner; and as she had been introduced by the deceased Queen, and was beloved by the young bride, it was no wonder that the great Catherine patronized her, and that she became, of course, the darling and plaything of the Court.

She returned at this time from sharing the caresses of royalty, loaded with its favours:—a splendid aigrette glistened in her hair, the gift of the Queen-mother; a golden bracelet, taken from the arm of the Duchess of Guise, encircled her neck; and the young Queen of Navarre had taken a small cross from her bosom to tie it round the waist of Adelaide; on which the King of France had observed—“That is your best present, my little heretic; be sure you take care of *that!*”

“And so, because it is the *best*, I will give it mamma,” said the child, repeating the words; but in another moment she added, “Oh, no! mamma shall have my aigrette, to make her look like the Queen, and I will tie this round the neck of dear papa!”

De Soubise was too much delighted with

a child on whom he doated, and from whom the long wars and various campaigns, in which he had been engaged, had separated him so long, to deny her any thing; and kneeling on his lap, she was allowed the satisfaction of tying the cross around her father's neck, asking, at the time she did it, "What the King could mean by calling her a little heretic, and looking so odd—that although he smiled, yet there was something that terrified her in his looks?"

"You are too young, my little maid," said De Soubise, "to understand any explanation I could give you to either the one question or the other; at a proper time I will tell you more: say your prayers, and for the present forget both."

CHAP. II.

Not find the body, say'st thou ?
No, Sir ; yet, by the large effusion of his blood,
Had a too sad assurance of the fact,
An argument of no less ill than death.

CHAMBERLAYNE.

WHEN the child was asleep, its parents could not forbear to comment on the malignant countenance of the King of France, and contrast it with that of their own beloved monarch ; and Maria was again led to expatiate on her fears and suspicions. Her husband not being harassed with the same doubts, and gratified by the attentions paid to his child, proposed retiring, and was soon sunk into that profound sleep which refused to visit the eyes of his anxious and mourning partner.

About two o'clock on the following morning, just as she was sinking into repose, Ma-

dame de Soubise was startled by sounds which proceeded from a distant part of the palace, of a mournful and discordant kind, and which every moment increased, and appeared to draw nearer to the part where they lodged. She arose in much alarm, and on going to her window, which looked upon the city of Paris, perceived many bands of soldiers running about the streets with lighted torches and naked swords. They entered various houses, and were seen to return in a few moments, dragging the sleeping and terrified inhabitants into the streets in some instances, and with bloody swords in others; and, amidst the various cries which now increased every moment, she heard distinctly the horrible words, spoken in a voice of authority which proved that these assaults were no private murder, "Kill them all:—spare not:—kill all the Huguenots!"

This was, indeed, that awful night which remains an eternal blot on the page of history—the massacre of St. Bartholomew, when the wicked Catherine de Medicis and her cruel son Charles IX. and their Catholic

nobles, resolved to extirpate, by one vast slaughter, all their Protestant subjects, together with the young King of Navarre,) their visitant and the husband of the Queen's daughter,) and his faithful attendants. Yet no other fault was ever pretended, than a desire to restore Christianity to its original purity, and to worship God according to the dictates of his word.

The first assassination was that of the brave and venerable Admiral Coligny, into whose apartment they burst with the fury of fiends, and on whose body, even after life was extinct, they committed every barbarous insult by order of Charles, who caused it to be hung on a gibbet, that he might glut his eyes with the horrid spectacle. Margaret, the wife of the young King of Navarre, was the only one of her family who was innocent of this crime; and it is said they durst not let her into the secret*, lest the humanity of her disposition should induce her to reveal it; but when her mother bade her good night, the wicked woman, conscious that she

* See Brantome and other historians.

intended to have her young husband murdered by her side, kissed her with an air of pity which awoke the suspicion of Margaret, who, feeling uneasy, was the sooner roused to a sense of what was passing in the palace.

It is certain that the young Queen saved the life of her husband by directing him how to escape through a door in her apartment covered by tapestry ; that she also preserved a gentleman who fled to her room for succour, by putting him under the bed ; but a third was murdered even as he clung round her feet. The terrible shrieks of the young Queen, while this scene took place in her apartment, now pierced the ear of Madame de Soubise ; and believing that the King of Navarre was murdered, she awoke her husband, and revealed the horrible surmise she feared, and the terrible situation of every thing around them.

The chamber in which they were lodged was at the extremity of the palace, and the door was so small and so situated, as to render it probable that, in the confusion of the scene which surrounded them, it might not

attract attention; but so soon as poor De Soubise became sensible, from the cries of the young Queen, that the life of his royal master was in danger, he insisted upon flying to his relief, and taking his sword in his hand, but without putting on his shoes, he set out cautiously towards the place from whence the cries proceeded. Soon the first shrieks were interrupted by others, and being by no means acquainted with the intricacies of the gallery on which he had entered, he met with perpetual interruptions. Several times two and three of the murderers, hot in pursuit, passed him with bloody swords in one hand and flambeaux in the other; but seeing him with a drawn sword they mistook him for one of their own party, and suffered him to hurry forward on his errand of mercy. Sensible of this advantage, he turned into the first open door from whence the cry of distress proceeded, and there perceived the Viscount de Chartres, an aged nobleman, kneeling before two ruffians, whose poniards were even then piercing his throat and his breast. In an instant

he plunged his sword into the body of the assassin nearest to him ; but ere he could regain it, the chamber was filled with more of the murderous party, and by one he was recollected, and mentioned “ as a Huguenot, who must suffer with his wife.”

At the mention of her name, inspired with horror, and urged by despair, he endeavoured to push his way through the assailants, and being a remarkably good swordsman, he was enabled to regain the narrow staircase from whence he had descended, and where he perceived his wife, who, with outstretched arms, stood ready to shroud him in the dark silk counterpane which she had snatched from the bed, and justly conceived might somewhat conceal him from a pursuit which the deep shadows and glaring lights rendered difficult ; but just at the moment when she had reached him, he received a deep wound in the side with a poniard, and fell at her feet with a groan which pierced her soul, and seemed to strike her with a phrenzy so terrible as to make her rush into the arms of the murderers.

The shrill, well-known voice of the distracted mother first awoke the child from the sound slumbers of infancy, and starting out of bed, she rushed to that of her parents: neither of them was there, yet their clothes were left: noises, lights, and words of terrible execration met her ear, and in great terror she cried aloud for her usual attendant; but, alas! poor Madeline, her kind and faithful Madeline, could make no answer!

The poor child went forward on the stairs, but the lights were gone, and the sounds which had appalled her seemed retiring to a distant part of the palace. She stepped forward, and stumbled over something, and at the same time was sensible that her feet were very wet: her cries were redoubled, and in a short time she saw a female servant approach with a light, followed by two men. They appeared to be hastening on some important mission to the apartments of the Queen; but the woman, arrested by the voice of infancy, checked her steps, and in the sight which now presented itself, felt that return of humanity which seemed suspended

in all around. The steps of little Adelaide were stopped by a murdered corpse; her feet were bathed by the warm blood still ebbing from its wound, and when the light approached, the child exclaimed—"It was papa! her own dear, dear papa!"

The men stooped to remove the body, and perceiving the cross tied round the neck, concluded that he had been murdered by mistake, which had occurred in many other instances; they therefore rolled the counterpane, which still lay near, around the corpse, and removed it to a place of security, the woman at the same time taking off the child's head-gear, which she thrust into the wound to prevent a farther effusion of blood. They passed on, and the child, whose sorrows had now in a manner subdued her fears, followed them, determined to stay with him she still considered her father: but the men would not suffer her to enter the closet where the body was deposited; she was thrust from one place to another, her cries disregarded, her person not recollected; and with her hair floating, her garment streaming

with blood, and her voice stifled with emotion, at last found herself in the open street, in the midst of horrors still greater than those from which she had escaped.

On one side might be seen the wretched Huguenots in the hands of the brutal soldiery, and not less brutal mob, suffering under every form which licensed cruelty and unbridled ferocity could adopt: some were poniarded, others were suspended, and the flying were shot from the balconies of the Louvre by the King himself and his brother. The body of Admiral Coligny, though beheaded, was suspended on a gibbet; and the indignities on every hand offered to the dead, rendered the living the more hideous spectacle. Among this scene of fiends and victims, the poor innocent, who but a few hours before had been so differently circumstanced, wandered about, not knowing whither to direct her steps, conscious only that her father was taken from her for ever, and that it was but too probable that the next victim she gazed upon might be the mother, who alone was dearer than him.

The day grew bright—the evening succeeded; but the work of slaughter still continued. The poor child sought only how to escape the horrible sights which every where surrounded her, and in doing that, had insensibly removed to the road of St. Denis, when, exhausted with hunger, sorrow, and fatigue, she sat down at a little distance from the road, and sunk into a sleep so profound, that it resembled death: inquiry had been made for her in the palace, but in vain; and the still, small voice of humanity was soon lost in the stronger appetite for blood, which for seven successive days demanded its victims, not only in Paris but the provinces.

When Adelaide awoke from her long sleep, she found herself in a very small room, laid on a mattress, and carefully covered; a person in a priest's habit was sitting near her, reading; and when he perceived her eyes open, he spoke to her in a low, but soothing voice, and offered her some bread and soup, which she ate with that eagerness natural to her situation; and having heard her sad and

artless account, he told her to lie down again, to remain perfectly quiet, and then left her, as if with an intention to inquire what was become of her mother.

In the evening the good priest (for such he certainly was) returned again, but he could give her no account of her parents, and he seldom stayed with her longer than was necessary. In two or three days, finding, that either from grief, fear, or the natural goodness of her disposition, she always paid the strictest attention to his injunctions, he ventured one day to allow her to go out with him; but she found it was only to take her to see another prisoner like herself, in the person of the young M. Rosny*, to whom he had afforded similar protection with herself, as he had flown to him on the first night of the massacre, and was yet closely preserved by him, to the hazard of his own life.

Every change of scene, however trifling,

* The second son of Baron de Rosny, who afterwards became the celebrated Duke of Sully, minister of Henry the Fourth.

was a relief to poor Adelaide, whose great anxiety for the fate of her mother was incessant, and who would at any time have gone out into the city to seek her, if her protector had not repeatedly assured her, that in doing it she would expose him to the fury of the assassins; and, young as she was, she could not bear to expose her benefactor to these wretches. Every good sentiment in her mind was strengthened by every interview she held with young Rosny, whose understanding and prudence were far beyond his years, and who took delight in impressing on her ductile mind all those maxims of wisdom and virtue, which even now, in his fourteenth year, he laid down for himself. About ten days after they were thus driven by distress to find an asylum with one who was their enemy only in his faith, the Baron de Rosny was enabled to remove his son, and send him out of the reach of danger, and from that time the captivity of Adelaide seemed more cruel than ever.

One night as she lay in bed, weeping over her forlorn situation, the good priest sud-

denly entered her chamber.—“ Rise, my child,” said he ; “ I have obtained the means of thy deliverance : put on the clothes which I have brought for thee, and take care never to mention thy name, connections, or sex, till thou art placed beyond the reach of danger, by being landed in England.”

“ England !” exclaimed Adelaide, “ Alas ! what can I do in England ? I had better die than be banished.”

“ Say not so, my child ; it is the land of thy mother, the land where her religion is professed, and where, doubtless, many will be found to protect thee ; at all events, it hath cost thy young friend Rosny no little trouble to procure thy enlargement and protection for thee, and doubtless it is thy duty to accept it.”

Adelaide sprang from the bed, and arrayed herself speedily in the dress of a page, which was prepared for her ; and though she could not help weeping bitterly at the thoughts of leaving her mother behind her, yet she tried to console herself, and appear even grateful for the kindness shown to her. She reflect-

ed, that if her mother had escaped the horrors of that dreadful night, and was aware that her father had perished, she would very likely endeavour to return to her native country, in which case she should most probably meet her.

With many tears and thanks, she bade adieu to the good man, who, in an age of fanaticism and cruelty, had shown himself so superior to the rest of his brethren, and joined the party who were taking the advantage of a short respite in their persecutors, to steal to that land of freedom where only they could enjoy the exercise of their religion in peace.

This party consisted of a father and two daughters, obliged like herself to submit to the necessity the times imposed, and travel in disguise. Various were the stratagems they adopted, and the difficulties they encountered, ere they could reach the sea-side; and when they arrived at length in the neighbourhood of Boulogne, it took all the money they could raise, and nearly all the luggage they carried also, to procure

secretly a boat, in which they ventured to take their passage for England. Here they arrived, friendless and pennyless, strangers alike to the customs and the language of the country, with the exception of the little orphan, whom they had consented to take expressly for the value of her knowledge of the English tongue, since through her means alone could they hope to gain any settlement in the country to which severe misfortunes had driven them.

CHAP. III.

The prosperous murtherer that hath clothed his guilt
In royal ermines, all those furs of state
Cannot preserve from trembling.

OLD PLAY.

M. CREBILLON and his daughters were people who had moved in the upper rank of citizens, but were strangers to the refinement of manners, and cultivation of mind, to which Adelaide had been accustomed; and young as she was, the child was fully aware of the

difference between her past and present situation, and led thence to look upon her loss of parents and country with increased anguish. She soon learned, however, to esteem, though she could not admire them; for they were truly upright in all their conduct, and pious in their dispositions. Willing to avoid being seen by any of their countrymen, they left the sea-shore as soon as they were able, and by degrees made their way to the metropolis, where they endeavoured to obtain employment in embroidery, for which they were well qualified.

It was the first care of Annette and Louise Crebillon to exchange their clothes for those which were proper, and as Adelaide desired the same comfort, they indulged her in it as soon as they were able; and they then first remarked the costly ornament which she had worn round her neck, ever since the remarkable night on which she received it. On its being taken off, the child desired that they would pay for the clothes with it, for she was well aware of the poverty in which they were all placed; but this M. Crebillon de-

clared he would not do, so long as he could avoid it ; and he put the bracelet with great care in his own portmanteau, saying, “ That it might sometime be the means of leading to some knowledge of the final fate of her unhappy mother, should she survive.”

By degrees, the daughters obtained such a degree of employment, as enabled them, though in a scanty manner, to provide for their household. As poor Adelaide was on all occasions their interpreter, it became her duty to buy every thing they wanted, and accompany them to the houses of their employers, by which means she became acquainted with the manner of living in England, and with the reserved but inherently generous character of the natives ; and her young and affectionate heart expanded towards them as the countrywomen of her dear mamma, and those to whom she could dedicate her future life. The beauty of her person, the superiority of her manners, and the singular circumstance of a child apparently English, and educated in a court, being reduced to such a situation, by degrees at-

tracted attention amongst ladies of the first quality, and the Crebillons obtained the finest and most profitable employment, and were even enabled to engage several people under them.

Adelaide was ever willing to engage in every service in her power to aid the family, but they never would allow her to be employed in any menial office; and as she early displayed great taste, she was usually occupied with drawing or contriving patterns; and in the amusement this afforded to her mind, added to the natural vivacity of her temper, the poor child appeared to recover from the shock of her early misfortunes, and regain the cheerfulness which belongs to early life, and since the elegance of rank, and the endearments of consanguinity were denied, to find a happy refuge in the kindness of humble friendship and active duty.

But Adelaide did not long enjoy this tranquil state of mind, and as she increased in stature and advanced to maturity, many tender remembrances and deep reflections awoke her sensibility, and destroyed her repose.

The thoughts of her parents, the desire she felt to know more of her mother's connections, and the earnest wish she had for finding some of her maternal relations in the country where it was most likely she would spend her days, all tended to render her anxious, melancholy, and restless.

Perhaps this solicitude was increased from the part which M. Crebillon always took in her cogitations. He had left his country from dire necessity, at a period of life when habits are fixed ; and although he was grateful to that which afforded him an asylum, his heart still lingered after his own, and the climate, the manners, the cookery, the buildings, and even the best as well as the worst things he met with, afforded him some motive for desiring to revisit his native country, although the loss of his property, the assassination of his sons, and the restrictions on his religious liberty, were all, he confessed, " sufficient reasons to oblige him to remain where he was."

On the contrary, his daughters found nothing to regret ; having left their country

under an impression of horror they could never forget, and having found in England great kindness and encouragement—enjoying the prospect of redeeming all their past losses, and being in general much too busy for spending their time in useless lamentations, they seldom attended to his discourse on these subjects, and were really glad that Adelaide would listen to him. When, however, they perceived that their only parent grew pale and thin, that Adelaide was little better, and that it was the opinion of a skilful leech that the country air would be good for both, with the greatest kindness they agreed to remove to some place which should furnish them with a purer air and more enlivening scenes.

Queen Elizabeth at this time kept her court at Richmond, and there were ladies around her who were likely to recommend the sisters to the royal favour, a circumstance of much importance, as it was well known that this great princess united with the weighty concerns of her kingdom a passion for dress, which induced her, in despite

of her general economy, to reward munificently every person who invented, or perfected the adornments of her person. In the hope of obtaining this royal patronage, the Crebillon family removed to a lodging in this beautiful village; and poor Adelaide soon found her health revive, and her spirits resume their energy, under circumstances which were calculated to give a new spring to her feelings, and elicit the powers of a mind oppressed and rendered dormant by peculiar circumstances.

As there were no newspapers, or general means of circulating the occurrences of foreign countries among the lower orders of society in those times, many circumstances of great interest and importance to their native country now first reached this family of emigrants. In their days of poverty and obscurity, and conversing only through the medium of a female child, no person had said any thing to them beyond the orders they gave, or the faults they found; but now that, by prudence and industry, they were enabled to cut a respectable figure, and

by constant practice had attained great power in the beautiful art they practised, and their little interprestress had grown up as elegant and intelligent as she was formerly lovely and artless, ladies of rank and fashion did not hesitate to communicate circumstances of interest and importance to her, on the subjects connected with her native country.

Adelaide now learned that the King of Navarre, to whom, from her earliest recollection, she had attached every idea of loyalty and admiration of which she was capable, had indeed escaped in the dreadful night which had been so fatal to his friends and followers; but that he had been ever since engaged in perpetual warfare with the united powers of France, Spain, and the Princes who composed what was called "the League," at the head of which was the Duke of Guise; but he being assassinated, the Duke of Mayenne took his place. That Charles, the bloody king, had himself become a terrific object of Divine retribution, having fallen into a state of both mental and bodily suffering, the most singular and excruciating,

during which it appeared as if he constantly heard the groans and shrieks of those victims whom his cruelty had immolated. No art could comprehend the nature of his complaint, no medicine relieve it; and it wasted him by such slow degrees, that for a long time death itself seemed to refuse him aid; all the blood in his body issued through the pores of his* skin; and although the most singular, and even horrible means were adopted to supply this waste of nature, yet every effort failed, and Charles expired in the flower of his youth—a terrible proof of the fury to which unbridled passions may transport the human mind, and a monument of that Divine justice which even in this world punishes the guilty.

Henry III. the brother of Charles, succeeded him, and for some years carried on the war against his brother-in-law the King of Navarre, though he was secretly inclined

* It has been asserted by some historians, that a bath made of the blood of new-born infants was used by this monster.

to favour him : like the other princes of his house, he was swayed by his mother, whose boundless ambition, detestable dissimulation, and horrible cruelty, led them all into innumerable sins, so that France continued to bleed in every vein, her fairest provinces were the seat of warfare, the rich were drained of their resources, the poor oppressed with famine, the laws trampled upon by the powerful with impunity, and pursued with unrelenting severity against others ; and thus a country, formed by its natural fertility and happy climate to be the happiest abode of man, was rendered, by the wickedness and weakness of its rulers, a scene of desolation—a field of blood !

Catherine died, and Henry III., oppressed by the very people who affected to defend him, forsook the League, and formed a confederacy with the King of Navarre ; but scarcely had he done so, when the enemies his former misconduct had made, contrived his destruction. A young man, named Jaques Clement, was fixed upon for this atrocious

purpose: he was introduced to the royal presence, and presented Henry with a forged credential, and while the monarch was engaged in perusing it, he drew a knife from his sleeve, and plunged it in his body. Henry withdrew the knife, and struck the monster in the face; and the guards, alarmed with the noise, rushed in and killed the assassin on the spot. The wound Henry received was slight, but the knife had been poisoned—it was therefore mortal: he had merely time to confess, to send for the King of Navarre, and declare him his successor—being indeed the lawful heir; and he thenceforth assumed the title of Henry IV. of France.

This circumstance had but just taken place; and this sovereign, surrounded by enemies and all the power of the League, appeared rather to have increased his troubles, than added to his honours, and Adelaide saw, in all this detail, no circumstance that promised any change of her affairs. Yet often would she wander on the banks of the Thames, and muse on the possibility of re-

turning to her country, claiming the protection of her sovereign, the restoration of her father's property, and that situation and rank in society which she felt she had a right to claim.

These ideas were more naturally awakened in the place around her, than they had ever been before; for the whole of the populous village of Richmond was peopled with the court of Elizabeth and its dependants. The Queen's palace, standing on a beautiful little plain, called "the Greene," extended in its offices down to the river, across which there was an easy ferry to Twickenham Park, where the Lord Keeper Bacon then resided. Lower down, on that side of the river, was the stately palace of Sion, which had been the ruin and death of its noble founder, the Duke of Somerset. Higher on the river, were many fine seats of the nobility, crowned by the princely, and unequalled mansion of Hampton Court, built by Cardinal Wolsey, and presented to Henry VIII. to appease his resentment for delaying his divorce from his first Queen. The Green itself was almost

surrounded by houses, where the ladies* of her Majesty's household resided; and even on the hill itself many dwellings were built, contrary to the former custom of the English, who were wont to show a predilection for low and covered situations. Thus on every side objects of grandeur and elegance were presented, which, aided by splendid shows of barges, filled with gay parties on the river, processions of gallant courtiers attending the Queen on horseback in the neighbouring parks of Sheen and Ham, with morris-dancers, mummers, and baitings on the green, all tended to restore to her mind the varied scenes of grandeur and sorrow, of affecting and intense interest, which had marked the first years of her existence.

With hopes and wishes naturally drawn to these subjects of meditation, the tender and noble heart of Adelaide ever reverted most strongly to the fate of her beloved parents, and she would many a time, with clasped hands and streaming eyes, exclaim,

* The best row of houses still retains its name, viz. "Maid of Honour's Row."

“ Ah ! why was I not a boy ? then would I have flown to my king, and beneath his standard have secured to my father’s name that glory his premature death denied ; then would I, at least, have had the satisfaction of weeping over his tomb, and gone from thence to seek the ashes of my murdered mother.—But is it not possible that my mother may still live ?” This question was every hour rising to her mind ; and as youth is ever full of hope, and Adelaide had found her hopes fed by the circumstance of ascertaining that several Huguenots, besides her own party, had actually escaped the general massacre, it was no wonder that she dwelt on a subject so captivating to an affectionate daughter, and that at length it produced in her a resolution to devote her life to seeking this beloved and long-lost parent.

This idea she nourished in secret, knowing that the sisters Crebillon would deem it alike romantic and impracticable, and that even the old man, although he would enter into her feelings, and probably propose to accompany her to France, was by no means

a person on whose courage or capacity she could place reliance on an occasion so momentous. To pray for direction from her Almighty Protector, to determine on losing no opportunity to increase her own knowledge on all points connected with the enterprise she meditated, and to make herself so useful to the Crebillons, that they might reward her with a small sum of money at the time when she should need it, was all she could do at present; and on this line of conduct she firmly determined.

Whilst these thoughts were agitating the breast of poor Adelaide, the good fortune her protectors so earnestly desired actually befell them. They had embroidered an apron* for the Countess of Nottingham upon her marriage, which had attracted the attention of the Queen, and she had not only honoured the bride by accepting it, but inquired after the persons who had wrought it. The apron was formed of a square piece of white

* This apron is still in existence, and appears to be the same in which she sate for her picture now in Hardwicke Hall.

silk, in the middle of which lay a lobster, worked with such ingenuity that it appeared really alive; the four corners represented snails creeping out of their shells, and the rest was ornamented with small insects and other appropriate designs. However strange such decorations may appear to us now, their performance merits admiration;—it is certain, at least, such was the opinion of this great Queen, since in a few days she condescended to send for Annette Crebillon to give her orders in person.

Poor Annette had never possessed much of that air of ease and politeness which characterize her countrywomen in general; for the constraint in which the unhappy Huguenots lived prevented their cultivating general society, and the constant labour required in her situation had hindered her from attaining more of the English language than was necessary for common intercourse: therefore she eagerly besought the lady in waiting to accept of Adelaide as her substitute, and represent her as unable to comprehend her Majesty's commands with the in-

telligence she felt to be due to their importance.

The apology was accepted, for the Queen had no desire to waste her words in explanations ill understood, and Adelaide, in trembling expectation, and an indefinite hope that some future good might arise to her from this interview, was hastily ushered into the royal presence, and beheld that woman whom she had ever considered, justly, the most powerful and the wisest of her sex—the one who had rescued England from those evils under which France still groaned, and extended the same blessings to every country within her influence.

Elizabeth was at this time nearly fifty years of age, but the clearness of her complexion, and the fire of her small but brilliant grey eye, induced a stranger to consider her much younger; she was not perfectly straight, but her agility and the dignity of her manners tended to conceal the defect, and the general impression she gave, was that of a handsome, active woman, at once commanding and affable, and every way

a queen ; she wore a round coif formed upon wire, which was terminated with scallops, which was so far unbecoming as it left the ears exposed, which never look well in advanced life. This deficiency was compensated in a great measure by her ruff, which was of Flanders lace, curiously placed also on light wires ; the lower part of her throat and chest, which were very white, were uncovered, and her manteau of cut Genoa velvet was well contrived to fill up the deficiencies, or add to the graces of her form. She sat upon a large chair stuffed and ornamented, and near her stood two young ladies who held extended before her a rich robe of white satin.

Turning her eyes from the dress to Adelaide, who stood in meek, but not downcast humility, at due distance, " So," said the Queen, " this is the damsel of whom ye, my Lady of Conynghame, spoke ; truly it seemeth a weak vessel to carry so weighty a matter ; natheless we will try its abilities."

A motion of the Queen's quick eye showed to Adelaide it was her Majesty's pleasure

that she should advance, which she did with graceful obedience, and a self-possession alike removed from confidence and embarrassment; and the regards of the sovereign seemed to assure some of the younger part of her attendants that she wished they would observe her, for she condescended to address her with that subdued voice which indicated encouragement and affability. “We will that ye embroider this dress all over with eyes and ears alternately—moreover, that ye use your utmost skill in skilfully causing a green serpent to entwine around the arms in such wise as that the head, with a forked tongue, shall appear beneath the shoulder; and look that it be done with great despatch.”

Sensible that the commands of her Majesty could be fully complied with, and grateful for the manners she had so graciously adopted, Adelaide, with deep blushes and low courtesies, promised her utmost diligence, and retired in a suitable manner from the royal presence; but ere she had left the room the Queen recalled her, and inquired “If she had ever before spoken with a Queen?”

adding to her nearest lady, “ It strikes us, that this little maid hath seen one who resembles our person.”

“ When I was very young, please your Majesty, the Queen of Navarre——”

“ Ay, there it is,” said Elizabeth, motioning to Adelaide to depart, and by no means sorry to suppose herself compared to Margaret of Valois, one of the loveliest princesses who graced a Court remarkable for beautiful women: such being, unhappily, the weakness which pervaded a mind in many points so powerful.

CHAP. IV.

O grief, thou blessing and thou curse ! how fair,
How charming art thou, sitting thus in state
Upon the eyelids of ingenuous youth,
Watering the roses of a healthful cheek
With dews of silver !

VILLAGE CURATE.

ELATED with the parting smile of her sovereign, from which, like many with more years and experience, she drew the most

flattering omens, Adelaide added her utmost endeavours to the perfecting of the Queen's orders with those of the sisters Crebillon, and by the accuracy of her drawing greatly facilitated their labours. All the time this tedious work was in course, her mind, at variance with her hands, continually ran upon the possibility of obtaining help from her Majesty in the prosecution of her design to return to France; and by every opportunity which presented itself, from the ladies of the Court, who came to inquire after the progress of the work, she failed not to inquire after the state of public affairs in her unhappy country.

Alas! all she learned continued but to present subjects of melancholy foreboding, especially on the part of the King, who, still harassed by the League, and ill obeyed by his alienated subjects, was little likely to succour any new objects of distress, or give the time to past investigation her case demanded; and she was obliged to confess even to herself, that it was better to suppress her feelings, and submit to her situation, than

rush on dangers which could answer no end, and sufferings which appeared inevitable.

Such were her feelings when she again had the honour to approach Majesty, and present to that discriminating eye the labours which had interested her so much, and which Elizabeth had declared “ she would examine herself.”

The Queen was now seated in a long narrow room, in one end of which was a small bay-window looking down the Thames, and another which looked into the irregular court of the palace ; in the former a table was placed, on which the attendants spread the dress for her Majesty to view. The examination was one of the most satisfactory nature, and every particular in the work was approved, more especially the serpents, on which Adelaide herself had been employed, a circumstance which the Queen learned from the heightened colour and happy expression of her countenance.

“ And we will,” said her Majesty, “ that thou shalt complete this work by placing precious stones in the eyes of these serpents ;

but we will not that our garment shall be again removed: take thy needle, and do it here in our presence*.”

With some trepidation Adelaide prepared to obey, when a lord of the bed-chamber entering, spoke some words in a low voice to the Queen, which appeared to affect her considerably. She answered by saying, “ she would meet him in the presence-chamber; and after that took two or three turns in the room, as if revolving some important point in her mind, and at length left the place, saying, as she went out, to Adelaide, “ Look thou dost not leave that business for a moment till it is finished.”

When the Queen and her ladies were departed, poor Adelaide, finding herself much more at her ease, sat down in the window, and perceiving that the work on which she was engaged would indeed give a great beauty and a perfect finish to the whole, was beginning to be perfectly absorbed in it,

* There is a picture of Elizabeth in a gown of this description, which has been beautifully enamelled by J. Bone, Esq. R. A., and is in his Gallery of Portraits.

when she was interrupted by the re-entrance of the Queen, followed by a strange gentleman, who, at the Queen's command, closed the door, and began to speak to her in French on business of importance; concluding an address which displayed the situation of Henry IV., his poverty, and the jeopardy in which he was placed, with earnestly entreating her Majesty's assistance in troops and money.

The distress in which Adelaide was now placed may be easily conceived: it was evident that the Queen had, in the trouble this affair gave her, entirely forgotten the command so lately issued; and Adelaide was herself sensible that, to gain the advantage of the light, she had so far put herself out of sight that the circumstance might be construed to her disadvantage; she was well aware that in the court of Catherine such a misfortune would be punished with instant death; and although not apprehensive of this in the country whose equal laws and mild administration forbade such tyrannical proceedings, she yet felt assured that she had,

however innocently, offended the Queen beyond forgiveness, and all she had ever heard on the subject of her severity, and the unrelenting firmness of her character, rushed suddenly to her mind; but amidst the beatings of her heart, and the confusion of her thoughts, she was yet compelled to hear the answer of the Queen and to rejoice in it.

“We would have ye hasten back with all speed, and tell our brother, your king, that he shall have succour from us with all convenience; and for as much as some delay is unavoidable, we will give ye assistance from our privy-purse—look ye are discreet in this matter, young man, for it is not our custom to offer aid of this description: for the rest, tell him that Robert d’Evreux, Earl of Essex, a soldier of whose fame ye are not ignorant, will shortly appear before Rouen.”

The stranger, with few but well-chosen words, returned thanks to the Queen, and took his leave, but not until she had, in an approving voice, inquired his name and family.

“ Maximilian Bethune, Baron de Rosny.”

“ Ye are of ancient and right honourable blood, young gentleman, and if the Queen of England has the gift of vaticination, you will exalt it yet higher.”

The Baron departed; the Queen was left alone, and Adelaide felt as if every moment must decide her fate for ever; but the name of De Rosny had brought so vividly back the horrors of her early infancy, and the remembrances which were attached to him who shared her sorrows and her protection, that every other trouble was forgotten, and her uncontrollable emotion first told the Queen what she had indeed forgotten, that her embroidress was in the room, and had been left there by her own command.

“ We have certainly forgotten our usual prudence,” said Elizabeth to herself, in that tone of discontentedness which augured ill for Adelaide; but yet the Queen’s vexation was not sufficient to overcome that calmness and self-satisfaction which a sense of having recently acted well never fails to throw over

the mind ; and Elizabeth advanced towards our innocent delinquent, in a state of temper neither absolutely good, nor bad.

“ So ! thou hast remained during our late conference, and I suppose thou understandest the tongue in which we spake ?—What part of our conversation reached thee ?”

“ All, *all*, most gracious Queen,” said Adelaide, falling at the feet of Elizabeth, “ for it was spoken in my mother-tongue, and by one who had soothed my first and great affliction.”

“ Well ! thou art honest, be prudent also—arise !”—“ Pardon me, great Queen,” cried Adelaide, prostrating herself still lower at the sovereign’s feet ; “ I cannot arise till your Majesty has heard my petition also. My father was murdered before my sight in the massacre of St. Bartholomew, my friends were scattered, my patrimony lost—but it is possible that my mother, my dear unhappy mother, still survives—permit me to seek her ?”

“ I have no means to aid thee in finding her,” said the Queen, in a voice of pity.

“ Oh ! yes — your — Majesty promised troops to aid my native king : if I were conveyed to him by any means, or under any disguise, he would assist my search, and, should it prove fruitless, would restore me to my grandfather or his representative, the Count de Soubise.”

“ So,” said Elizabeth, a shade gathering on her brow, “ thou wouldst persuade us to make thee a drummer in our army, or present thee as a stray lamb to our cousin Harry, who, with many great qualities, possesseth not the virtues suitable for receiving such a gift—no, no, thou art better at home ; we will devise thee employment more suited to thy birth—be content.”

“ Oh ! my liege, I will be content to lose my birthright, to pass my life in the humblest obscurity, so your Majesty suffers me but to convince myself that I have no longer a mother—for her sake I know myself capable of high achievement and severe endurance, and I long to encounter even the hardship which may prove me worthy of her : when I cease to hope, then only can I sub-

mit to the fate which separates us. Alas ! we have been parted by blood, but every drop she has shed binds her still nearer to my heart—I can never rest again, if I lose the power of seeking her, perchance of saving her.”

The agony of sorrow, the rapid eloquence of heart, which was beyond the reach of language, and even the *words* of Adelaide, deeply affected the Queen, and she murmured inwardly—“ The child was parted from her mother by *blood*,” in a manner that proved she was reflecting on the early loss she had herself sustained from the hand of violence : she raised Adelaide from her feet, granted the pardon she now earnestly implored, and finally concluded with saying, “ That if she would so dye her skin and her hair, as to prove an effectual disguise, and promise that she would not (under any emergency) apply to the general*, she would procure her some escort in the inferior department of the army, which should enable her to reach Rouen in

* The Earl of Essex was appointed to this command, but did not eventually take it.

safety ; after which it would probably be in her power to get to Paris, and prosecute the inquiries of which she spake."

Gratified and grateful, Adelaide retired, calling a thousand blessings on the head of her benefactress, and scarcely able to persuade herself that the whole was not a dream.

· CHAPTER V.

—————The storm begins—poor wretch,
That for thy Mother's fate art thus exposed
To loss, and what may follow : fare thee well !

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN Adelaide, under the seal of secrecy, revealed her intentions and expectations to the family with whom she had so long resided, their grief at the thoughts of parting with her was alike bitter and sincere ; and they confessed themselves astonished beyond measure, to find that a girl so gentle and timid, so tender and humane, as Adelaide, should think of encountering

danger and difficulty in pursuit of an object there was little hope of obtaining, and certain difficulty in pursuing. They knew not the sensibility, the devotedness of a heart whose affections were exalted by a vivid imagination and a retentive memory, operating upon deeply-impressed lessons of noble and chivalric sentiments; but, happily for Adelaide, the suffrage of Majesty operated so much on their opinions, that they were willing to condescend so far as they were able to the end she proposed, with the only proviso, "that she should not acquaint their father with her intention."

The flowing locks of Adelaide were cut close, and left to curl naturally thick and clustering on her forehead, her eyebrows darkened, and her face, neck, and hands, washed with walnut-juice, by which she gained the colour of the wandering gipsies—a kind of half-military dress was provided for her, and she went in the character of a servant to an old officer, named Captain Latimer, whose young wife he obliged to accompany him across the water, although he did

not intend her to go with him to the scene of warfare. Thus equipped, Adelaide bade adieu to her royal mistress, who expressed herself satisfied with the completeness of her disguise ; and as she was naturally inclined to be romantic, it is probable that she experienced some pleasure in aiding the adventurous designs of a young girl, whose purity of motive she could not doubt, and whose affectionate anxiety and warmth of heart alone led her to renounce for a time the appearance and the habits of her sex, and to subdue, not only the selfish indulgences, but the natural vanity her youth and beauty were so well calculated to awaken.

When Adelaide landed on the shores of France, she could not help feeling a degree of terror which she had never experienced during her long stay in England ; and she was obliged to compose her spirits with the reiterated assertion, “ that she would return as soon as she had accomplished her object,” and “ that if it pleased God to spare her, unquestionably she would end her days in England :”—she wondered at her own teme-

rity, and became sensible of a thousand difficulties she had not foreseen, and peculiarities of situation for which she was wholly unprepared.

Captain Latimer, with whom she travelled, knew her only as a French boy, the son of Huguenot parents, named Jaques Francia, one who, being in delicate health, and accustomed to the society of women, was recommended not less to the kindness of his wife than himself; for the Queen, with true feminine consideration, although she earnestly recommended Adelaide to persist in the disguise she was compelled to adopt, yet purposely placed her under protection, which, in case of sickness or other emergency, would enable her to procure the comfort of female society. Captain Latimer was a staunch Protestant, a good soldier, and a man of unblemished honour; but he the more considered it his duty by every means in his power to promote the end the youth had in view, and especially to wean him from effeminate pursuits, and, what he termed, “make a man of him.”

For this purpose he insisted on taking him along with his regiment to Rouen, whither indeed poor Adelaide desired to go, in the hope that she should by some fortunate circumstance obtain the notice of the King, and thence find some clue to her relations, but from which she yet shrank, as being likely to present scenes of bloodshed and terror, to which her spirits were unequal. By a desperate effort of self-conquest, and through the higher aid bestowed in answer to her ardent though silent prayer, she was enabled to enter on this awful scene without betraying the fears which agitated her heart, or regretting that she had engaged in her arduous undertaking.

From this time we must occasionally adopt the name by which our heroine was known, and depict her to our imagination, in appearance a youth of fifteen, arrayed in a military garb, a cap and feather on her head, a spear in her hand, and riding a Flemish pony with that grace and ease, which the habit of early life had enabled her to attain, as in her country the females rode in the

same manner as the men ; thus equipped, the stripling appeared before the walls of Rouen, where a part of Henry's army lay, but the King himself had not joined them yet, having, with a blameable delay, suffered his allies to be there before him.

The besieging army soon made a desperate attempt on the city, and the horrid front of war again called on our young adventurer to look on blood. The English bore the brunt of the action, and behaved with their wonted valour ; but they were repulsed with considerable loss, and Captain Latimer was severely wounded. " Jaques," said he, " if it be possible, bind up my shoulder with thy scarf." Jaques obeyed, but in a manner that indicated the tremor he was in ; yet the wound received by his friend evidently awoke in him a desire of vengeance, as he immediately drew his sword and ran forward with an impetuosity which indicated either courage or despair. In a few moments he was again divided from his friend ; a party of the besiegers rushed out, and confusion and carnage reigned on every side. To think

and to fly were alike impossible, and death every moment menaced our young adventurer; when the appearance of a French officer bravely struggling and nearly overpowered by his enemies, arrested the attention of Jaques, and, urged more by humanity and valour, he flew to his assistance, and by the rapidity and agility, rather than the force of his weapon, succeeded in rescuing him from the destruction which menaced him; and those who were not compelled to abandon their prey from their wounds, slunk from it from shame at being foiled by such an opponent.

“ You have rescued me, brave boy,” said the gentleman, “ and you will find me not ungrateful for the preservation of an existence I have little reason to value; tell me your name and your regiment.”

Jaques had scarcely time to reply, when he was hurried away to the tent of Captain Latimer, who had been again wounded desperately, and carried from the field. The night was now closing; the sortie, vigorously repulsed, were retiring within the

gates, and every step was marked by proofs of the violence of the late conflict—dead bodies gashed with horrid wounds, sufferers in the very act of dying, dissevered limbs, bleeding trunks, and mangled horses, met the eye; and the ear was not less appalled by the loud groans, or the faint cries, which were heard on every side, mingled with distant shouts, the instruments which sounded retreat, and the lamentations which those within the walls uttered for their lost companions.

Adelaide saw, not only with sincere compassion, but great fear for the probable consequences, that the only friend she possessed in this awful situation, was indeed in a state of the utmost jeopardy; and her pity was soon abundantly increased, by observing that this man, usually rough even to severity in his manners, and now suffering under acute pain, addressed her with the utmost kindness, and, forgetful of himself, seemed only anxious for others. “Jaques, my good lad,” said he, “we have made no great hand of it to-day, though our men fought like lions,

and many a brave fellow now lies gasping his last, to whom a draught of cold water or a bit of lint would be invaluable—pr'ythee try to help them; I am thankful thou art safe; I was wrong to expose thee so much.” He spoke with great pain, and Adelaide’s first care was to procure him every comfort and ease his sad situation admitted; after which she applied her utmost diligence to soothing and alleviating the miseries of those around her. Regardless of all that annoyed or distressed her, she seemed inspired with the power to endure and sustain far beyond what so fragile a form could promise, to relieve and help her suffering brethren: the last voice of the dying whispered thanks for the heavenly consolation her words bestowed, and the mangled blessed her aloud, for the tenderness with which she bathed his wounds, and the facility with which she fled to administer the cup of relief; yet, during the whole night in which Adelaide was thus employed, she could not for a moment forget the officer for whom she had made her first essay in arms, and in whom she felt even

more interest than any one around her. He was a man, pale, aged, and woe-worn in appearance ; but his person was dignified, his voice full and sweet, and there was something in his manners which reminded her of the court in which she had first been nurtured ; she could not forbear to believe that he was a man high in office ; and as she had had it in her power to oblige him, thought, if she could see him again, he might prove the medium of introducing her to the King, and thus procuring her the recognition of some of her relations. Of these relations she had, indeed, but very confused ideas : she remembered only that her grandfather, the Count de Soubise, was an old man, and must be dead ere now ; that she had once an aunt, the Marchioness de Melun, but was not aware that she had any uncles ; and the different situation in life of the Crebillons had not enabled them to assist her recollection. In the midst of these reflections, poor Adelaide, stretched on the ground beside her commander, fell into that deep repose her fatigues demanded ; and the good cap-

tain, to whom her kind attentions had already proved of the utmost importance, gladly suffered her to remain many hours in the enjoyment of a blessing her exhausted frame and agitated mind alike required.

CHAP. VI.

“ Nothing noble can be performed without danger.”

MONTAIGNE.

ADELAIDE was awakened by the voice of the Captain, when the sun was rising towards the meridian. “ Come, Jaques, my boy, I pr’ythee rise, and help me to dress, for, in spite of my wounds, I am determined to go on duty* ;—a hundred brave Englishmen have volunteered to regain the ditch we lost yesterday, and by God’s grace I will be one of them.”

Adelaide started up, and, knowing it was in vain to dissuade him from a purpose dictated by unquenchable valour, instantly be-

* See Sully and other historians.

gan to apply new dressings to his wounds :— while she did so, he informed her, “ that during her sleep he had happily found the means of forwarding her to Paris, in the disguise of a peasant ; and, as that city as well as Rouen were in a state of siege, it was one that must not be neglected, as it would afford the means of inquiring about the friends she sought much better than at a later period, when, probably, the city would be taken, the inhabitants slain, and in the distress and confusion that must inevitably prevail, all chance of attaining her object would be lost.”

“ But then, Sir, I must leave you, and I shall not have a single friend to whom I can speak.”

“ True, boy—but thou art a Frenchman, in thy own country, and wilt make thy way ;—besides, it is but leaving me *first*— I have no hopes of quitting the trench alive, and it will be a consolation to me to know that I have in my last moments fulfilled the commands of my Queen ;—and Jaques, my dear boy——”

Adelaide, her eyes swimming in tears, looked wistfully in his face, unable to speak.

“Thou art surrounded with dangers, yet under the eye of Providence, and I trust thou wilt escape—if thou shouldst live, and get forward in life, or if thou shouldst return in poverty and exile, in any wise, I pr’ythee, remember I leave a widow, and a fatherless boy, to whom thy example, at least, may be a benefit.”

Adelaide seized his hand, and, dropping on her knees, solemnly assured him, “that if it pleased God to help *her*, she would help *them* also.” Whilst she spoke, a discharge of artillery shook the air, the trumpets sounded, and a loud shout was heard of “The King! the King!”

Disabled as he was, the gallant soldier sprang forward, and Adelaide with strained eyes and beating heart, beheld that gallant sovereign, whose name she had been taught to lisp with that of her own parents, and to whom she still looked as a friend and father. The King, mounted on a beautiful charger, was arrayed in light armour; a scarlet cloak

hung gracefully from his shoulders, and a large plume of milk-white feathers surmounted his helmet* ; his countenance, open and commanding, indicated at once the natural sweetness of his temper ; and the habitual exercise of his martial firmness, and the rapid glances of his piercing eye, showed how much his power of vision aided that promptitude of action which rendered him so great a general† ; —he was attended by the princes,

* This dress, by which he was always known, subjected him to great danger, particularly once, when he was about to besiege a city, where, the gates being open, he rode in with only about thirty followers, being in advance of his army. About two hundred of the enemy's soldiers being in the streets, they recognised him, and an order was instantly given, " to fire only on him with the scarlet cloak and snowy plume : " —the gates were at this moment closed behind the little troop, and their destruction seemed inevitable ; but the King backed his horse to the gates, and met the assailants with invincible courage, at the same time giving a signal to some of his attendants to climb on the gates and make a signal to his troops : this was effected, the gates were forced, and the King and his party rescued with the loss of one man only.—*See Sully's Memoirs.*

† This eagle-eye is also possessed in an extraordinary degree by the Duke of Wellington.

dukes, and other great men, who had attached themselves to his standard; but De Rosny, who was nearer to his heart than any of them, and who was not only his most attached but his most useful servant, was at a great distance, and by no means honoured with that open countenance he merited: such were the difficulties and dangers which surrounded a monarch whilst alive, whose memory is now held in such high estimation.

The day was beautiful, the sun shone without a cloud; the terrible witnesses of yesterday's warfare were now removed; the Seine flowed sweetly through the green plain, and the city looked proudly from her battlements, her streaming pennons answered in haughty defiance from the army on the plain, who, inspired by the presence of the King, and the reinforcement of troops fresh from victory, forgot their recent suffering, and longed to return to the charge. At this soul-enlivening spectacle the heart of Adelaide swelled in her bosom, and, in defiance of danger, she felt as if she could again enter on the glorious toils of war;—she

longed to press forward, and throw herself at the feet of her own sovereign, as she had done at those of Elizabeth, and there repeat her sorrows, avow her name and sex, and petition for the fortune, or the knowledge she so anxiously sought; but the modesty of her nature, the repugnance she felt at being recognised in man's apparel, and the remembrance of the Queen's counsel and commands, alike prevented her in the first moments of his appearance; and immediately after, the crowd of officers which surrounded him, eager to receive his commands, or submit themselves to his recognition, rendered it impossible.

Yet, at the moment when the possibility of thus assisting her fallen fortunes was gone by, Adelaide (like many others) sought vainly to redeem it, and climbing on an eminence, cast up by the besieging troops for the purpose of reconnoitring, she gazed again intently on the King, who had now dismounted, and was surrounded by his generals. She perceived from this situation, that the French officer whom she had assist-

ed the day before, pressed forward from the lines to speak to his sovereign, and was received by him with the most gracious courtesy, and even personal regard, since it was evident that the King not only inquired after his wounds, but even commanded that he should resign the situation which prevented him from taking due care of them. The sovereign's orders in this particular seemed reluctantly obeyed, even by one who was evidently a severe sufferer; and as he withdrew, his eyes caught the figure of Adelaide thus conspicuously situated;—he stepped back and pointed her out to the sovereign, who instantly despatched a messenger to her, bearing his commission and a standard, which she received in breathless alarm, and again felt that her fate was in her hands, that she might approach the King and claim his protection.

A terrible discharge of cannon from the city at this moment became the signal for rallying to the besiegers, and Adelaide, hastily descending with her new honours in her hand, stumbled and fell;—in another

moment she found herself raised by Captain Latimer, who told her that the people with whom he had concerted for her removal were at a little distance, and would convey her in a cart for about twenty miles, after which she might fall down the Seine to Paris.

“ But I cannot now go,” exclaimed she ; “ behold the honour I have received from his Majesty.”—“ I see it,” said Latimer, smiling, “ and see also, that you have not strength to carry it, and that you tremble in every limb :—you are a brave boy, Jaques, and a generous one ; but take my word you were not born for a soldier, and I wish the Count de Soubise had not taken this method of rewarding you.”

At this very moment the brave old soldier was stretched breathless at her feet—the shock of the circumstance, the astonishment in which the mention of her own name had involved her, united to the extreme anxiety and excitement she had previously felt, altogether overcame her, and she sank down upon the body of her late friend, as pale and senseless as the corpse.

The din of slaughter continued: but the terror of this well-disputed field, the short lamentations of those who, in their rapid flight and sanguinary action, cast an eye on old Latimer and his *protégée*, were all unknown to Adelaide, whose senses first returned to her under a sense of an uneasy pitching motion; and at length she became sensible that she was placed in some vehicle making a slow way over a bad road, and she raised her head that she might respire more freely, and perceive her companions.

Several people of both sexes began to surround her, and, in a dialect which rendered them difficult to understand, informed her that one of them had ventured to seek her on the plain, and, finding her without wound on the body of her friend, had taken her on his shoulders, conceiving "that as he was paid for her removal, whether she turned out dead or alive, he should have done the honest thing."—They then offered her some refreshment, and drawing together some mats, endeavoured to place her commodiously.

Adelaide endeavoured to recal her scattered senses, and consider what was the best plan for her to pursue. Shocked as she was with the death of her protector, she yet well remembered the last words he had uttered, and the knowledge that there really existed a *Count de Soubise*, and that he was evidently a favourite with the King, was to her a source of the greatest comfort. Yet no power of memory could enable her to conjecture in what degree of relationship he stood to her:—he was too young for her grandfather, yet older than her father would have been—of course he could not be a younger brother;—there seemed little doubt but he was some collateral branch, who, in the absence of the heir, had innocently stepped into those possessions which of right belonged to her.

Adelaide had heard stories of cruel uncles who had seized the possessions of orphan relations, and she felt fully aware of her own inability to prove identity, by any thing save the golden bracelet which Henry's Queen had placed round her small neck, on a night

too memorable to be forgotten. But she could not reflect on the countenance or the manners of the Count de Soubise, and believe that he would dispute the point—especially at a period when he had not only received obligation from her, but acknowledged it, as appeared from the boon he had solicited from the King. To this she added her remembrance of the melancholy that reigned in his countenance, the little desire he expressed for life ; and she thence drew the conclusion, that he had lost all his relations by the same stroke which took her own father, and would, like her, be grateful for receiving a relation and friend.

The more Adelaide thought on this subject, the more she became convinced that her poor mother had perished as well as her father, in which case it would be a folly for her to proceed to Paris ;—at all events, the Count, as the representative of his family, was the most likely person to assist her search for the widow of his relative, if she lived, or assure her of the certainty of her death ; every circumstance, therefore, com-

bined to determine her on returning, and seeking an immediate interview with the Count.

Whilst these cogitations had been passing in the anxious mind of Adelaide, every movement of the uneasy vehicle had removed her farther from the place where she now earnestly desired to be, and rendered her also insensible to the conversation of those around her, which, if attended to, would have informed her that they also were placed, from different causes, in a state of doubt and extreme uneasiness. These people, at the risk of their lives, were engaged in procuring provisions for Rouen, and they were connected with others who supplied Paris likewise in a state of siege) with the necessaries of life also.

Henry, attached to his people, and sincerely desirous to reduce the rebellious cities for the general good of his kingdom, rather than his own aggrandizement, by no means carried on the war in the spirit of conquest, and therefore might be said to wink at the supplies which from time to time were thus

conveyed to the suffering inhabitants; and it was from a knowledge of the monarch's sentiments that the English officer had been led (even for a desirable purpose) to hold any communication with these contraband dealers. It was, however, well known, that many of Henry's generals, less scrupulous than himself, would not have had any hesitation in practising the custom of the times upon them, and hanging immediately any who fell into their hands: hence every movement was one of danger, and the power of forwarding the stranger with safety had furnished them with fears, by no means tending to the safe conduct of Adelaide.

When, therefore, Adelaide offered them a noble reward to take her back again, the whole party were struck with the idea that she sought to inveigle them into the hands of the soldiery, and they were unanimous in their invectives against her; and in a short time *their* council of war had determined that their only safety lay in her destruction. Alas! in a country distracted by civil broils, inured to bloodshed, even murder loses its

terrific character, and, when referred to as a measure of self-defence, appears light in the eyes of the ignorant and ferocious. With horror it is impossible for words to convey, Adelaide, in a few words, whose meaning was rather conveyed than uttered, learned their determination; and that instead of embarking her on the Seine, according to agreement, they meant to plunge her under its waves.

The human being most assailed with the sorrows of life, or worn down with its cares, shrinks from a violent death; and the young, whose sorrows, when most violent, are ever relieved by hope, feel it peculiarly hard to be seized on the threshold of existence. Thus Adelaide, who had begun to hope for the revival of early ties and increased enjoyments only a few hours before, deemed the very fate she had tempted the preceding day, one of unparalleled hardship now. In agony she intreated them to accept all she could offer them; and her purse, brooch, and even her precious bracelet, were instantly placed in the hands of him who appeared

their leader, and whom she hoped the more readily to propitiate, because he was the man who, at much personal hazard, had carried her from the field of war.

“ But wilt thou swear by the Holy Virgin not to return to Rouen ? ”

Adelaide hesitated—she could not swear to a falsity, and she well knew that the first object of her life would be to return :—alarmed, but indignant, she replied, “ that she would not swear,” and at the same moment she felt for her sword.

That instrument of defence had been taken from her before she was laid in the cart, and in another moment it was pointed at her breast ; but most happily, in the act of feeling for it, her hand pressed on the pistols, which were stuck in her belt, and had escaped the eye of her plunderer, from the circumstance, arising from feminine delicacy, which led her to wrap her military cloak closely around her person, so as to form a kind of hanging drapery.

Nerved by the exigency of the case, and remembering with pride her exertions the

preceding day, in behalf of him whom she might yet live to bless, she instantly drew out a pistol with either hand, and resolutely presenting them, exclaimed, "You may murder me if you please, but, depend on it, the first who touches me shall, at least, pay for his treachery dearly." For a space, all stood gazing upon her in silence, and in a few moments the paddling of oars was heard. "Wilt thou go to Paris?" said one of the women. "I will," answered Adelaide. "Then go," said the man; and hallooing to the boat, it drew to the side as well as it was able, being heavily laden.

So fully was the poor wanderer persuaded that these wretches were bent on murder, that she was glad to plunge into the water and be taken on any terms into the closely-stowed vessel; but when there, being aware they had no fire-arms, she ventured to insist on their returning her bracelet, at least, and menaced them in case of refusal. In another moment something whizzed through the air, but to her infinite mortification did not reach the boat, but fell close beside her, into the

Seine. 'This was worst of all, as it seemed to destroy the very chance of obtaining restitution; and, her spirit exhausted beyond endurance, she sat down and wept long and bitterly.

The sun had been long below the horizon when she left the cart, and it became nearly dark during the altercation with the peasants; but a pale crescent now began to spread its cheering light, and discover to the disconsolate traveller the forms of objects on the banks of this celebrated river. Ah! how different were they from the banks of the Thames, which she had forsaken for them! Uncultivated fields, dismantled villages, wandering hordes of wretched inhabitants, garrisoned castles, frowning in feudal tyranny in some places—in others marked by recent devastation, their smoking ruins rose in awful grandeur! The beauties of nature, the blessings of Providence, and the attainments of art, were alike lost to this unhappy country, whose children, like vampires, preyed on each other's blood.

By slow degrees they approached that

city Adelaide had so long desired to see, but which she now dreaded to approach, friendless, moneyless, and even hopeless as she now was; for the more her desires were drawn towards the Count de Soubise, the less dared she to expect that her mother survived, though it was certainly not less possible than it had been hitherto. Her only consolation arose from knowing that the kind Crebillons had quilted in the doublet which she wore under her military clothing, various billets to such of their old acquaintances and religious friends as might yet survive, and she trusted that some of them might provide her a place of refuge: she thought, too, it was possible that the good Father La Faye, her former friend, might be found, and she could not doubt his kindness.

On their approaching near to Paris, but yet, from the windings of the river, wanting a considerable period to complete their voyage, two of the passengers desired to be landed, saying, "they could either procure some kind of conveyance, or manage to pursue their journey on foot;" since it was

agreed on all hands that they could not enter Paris till nightfall. The impatience of Adelaide to obtain the use of the coins which were also secured in her clothing, the fear she felt of a part of the crew, and also the belief she had adopted that a man and his wife, who were about to alight, were decent and respectable people, altogether induced her to request that she also might disembark, which was not objected to, as the master of the vessel was aware that she had no means of payment for her accommodation beyond the only one of her pistols which she had shewn, and which he agreed to accept, perceiving its value; and he also gave her a portion of bread, observing, "there were vineyards enow on the way, whose owners were at the wars."

Happily, Adelaide was not deceived in her present fellow-travellers, notwithstanding the predatory life they led, which, by subjecting them to daily punishment, had a tendency to give the desperate character which had already alarmed her. Although these people, as dealers in provisions, exact-

ed already an exorbitant price for their commodity, yet they preserved a spark of humanity in their hearts, and seemed to feel for a poor boy going, as they apprehended, to seek certain destruction in the devoted city, from a principle of natural affection; and from time to time allowed him to ride on the mules, with which it appeared they were supplied by contract. They reached the suburbs of Paris in the dusk; and, having persuaded themselves that they might confide in the good intentions of poor Jaques, they ventured to show him a subterraneous road beneath the wall, by which he entered the city through a ruinous building. The hole through which he was directed to emerge was so small that it might easily escape the most vigilant eye, but it had a communication with an excavation, in which were seen various packages of wheat and salted provisions; and at parting he was told, "that if it should happen hereafter that he became the servant of a rich family, and the distress of the town should increase, he might depend upon gaining relief in pro-

portion to the value of the property he should deposit," and he was shown the exact spot in which he might lay the money or goods with which he was intrusted; but, at the same time, an oath of secrecy was exacted from him, and an assurance was given that, in case of failure, "escape from the vengeance of the associated body concerned in this traffic was impossible;"—then recommending him to a poor lodging at a considerable distance, the grate through which he had been thrust was closed, and Adelaide, weary, hungry, and dejected, was left to her fate.

The dread of encountering such characters as the peasant carriers, made our unhappy wanderer long hesitate as to the course she ought to pursue; and the idea that in her sleep she should be murdered for the value of her doublet, at length induced her to feel about for a place in which to lay her weary head, and climbing into a kind of upper chamber, she disposed herself to seek repose; but the novelty of her situation entirely forbade it, although the place was quiet to

desolation, and possessed, to her conception, rather the character of a ruined chateau, in a country province, than a portion of a great metropolis. As soon as it was daylight she rose from her hard couch, which had consisted of fallen timbers (the place having been burnt), and with trembling eagerness applied herself to unripping the dress where the kind sisters had contrived to secrete what was now her only treasure.

The first thing she found was, perhaps, the most welcome, being a store of small comfits, which were medical restoratives, but now eagerly seized as common food; then followed the letters of introduction, in number five; but, alas! there was little money, for her providers had conceived that her supply of that article would be abundant: many useful things of light weight followed—as preservatives for the feet, needles and silks for embroidery, and various leaves containing portions of the New Testament, in the new English translation; but there was no more coin to be found, it being, in fact,

all they possessed of the country in which she was, and English money, at the present moment, would have subjected her to suspicion.

Replacing her clothes, and concealing her pistol, at length Adelaide ventured forth—her first object being bread. The alarming price at which she purchased it, rendered her late disappointment double, and she no longer wondered at the air of unnatural tranquillity which pervaded the city, and the whispering anxious tone in which every one seemed to address his neighbour: vivacity was already quelled; but manly daring and enduring resolution, mixed with looks of defiance, might be read on the brows of the passengers, and every one seemed preparing for a conflict, or suffering one: this was but the prelude of the storm, yet was it awful and appalling.

By dint of inquiry, Adelaide, after many a weary step, at length found the abode of that good man, who, in despite of the errors of his creed, and the example of all around

him, had sheltered her in the hour of adversity.—Alas ! the place which knew him then, knew him no more—he slept in death.

She then, taking out her first epistle, began cautiously to address her steps towards a family whom, as Huguenots, it was necessary to approach in the most guarded manner, lest she should draw evil on them from whom she sought benefit:—after a long search, she succeeded in finding their graves ; the aged domestic who showed them, congratulated herself “ that they only died heart-broken and impoverished—they were not, like their relations, murdered.”

Through this person she obtained knowledge that her second letter was addressed to a family long since banished. Of the third there was but one member left : he was a man whom sorrow had rendered churlish, and he repelled her with severity ; but she learned that the two remaining letters were addressed to people who now constituted one family, who, he assured her, were too poor to take in wandering Jews, if they were sent by angels, instead of Crebillons.”

It was again night ; Adelaide was again hungry, and the house she sought was far distant—could she attain it, her reception might not be more kind ; and, indeed, how could she expect hospitality in a besieged city ? Suffering under extreme privation, and threatened by famine, again and again she lamented the sad circumstance which had brought her hither, and vainly wished for the plains of Rouen, and the Count de Soubise.

Adelaide had only one single subject of hope left—it lay in remembering that her next appeal was to her own sex, and she trusted that their hearts would be more tender. She was aware that the family to whom her weary steps were directed, constituted the remains of a little community of single women, who had lived together as a sisterhood of Protestant nuns, but unbound by vows, and avoiding all particular profession. M. Crebillon had married his wife from this house ; his daughters had been educated there, and learned that art which had been unexpectedly their means of life, when, dri-

ven from his lucrative business of a silversmith, he had fled to the land of liberty and mercy, but lately under similar thralldom.

So much depended on the reception Adelaide might meet with in this her last house of refuge, that the agitation of her spirits subdued even her sense of weariness and suffering, and she found herself in the street to which she had been directed before she was aware; but when she saw the house itself, which she had often heard described as in a retired corner, with a small garden, and porched entrance, the beatings of her heart became almost audible; her trembling knees refused to support her, and she sank down with a faint groan at the threshold of the door, eagerly grasping the letter which was to be the herald of admission.

The aged sisterhood within had just taken their last frugal meal, when they were alarmed by a sound, which several observed "they must expect to hear more frequently;" and one of them partly opening the door, and perceiving male attire, was on the point of closing it, when another observed, "it was

but a boy, and he was fainting." In a few moments Adelaide found herself seated within the house—a cup of water was held to her lips, and a piece of coarse bread offered to her hand. She took it eagerly, at the same time offering the letter.

She who, as the oldest, was deemed the superior, took the letter in her hand, holding it as a kind of petition, which she grieved it was not in her power to grant; but one of the younger casting her eye on it, was struck with the hand, and eagerly inquired of the messenger "whence it came?"

"From M. Crebillon and his daughters."

In a moment three out of the five crowded around the stranger, and overwhelmed him with questions, all indicating the sincerity of their affection, the simplicity and goodness of their hearts; and in a few moments a glass of wine and a morsel of cheese were presented to one who was already received as a guest, although there appeared much difficulty in assigning him an apartment. The moment Adelaide comprehended this, she referred them to the letter, in which they

would learn, “ that a female, the daughter of a martyred member of their own church besought their protection.”

Of all other ties, religion is ever found the strongest bond in the human bosom : travellers to the same heavenly country, by the same medium, under the same circumstances of constraint and suffering, cheered by the same hopes, upheld by the same resolution, find themselves knit together by pure and indissoluble attachment, as members of a family destined to live together for ever, and united by circumstances over which neither time nor nature holds control. The warm and affectionate hearts of this little sisterhood, already tenderly awakened, were now led to receive our wanderer as a branch of their family in a more holy and awful sense—“ as a member of Christ,” as the offspring of martyred parents ; and when she had taken the sustenance she so much needed, all embraced and blessed her by turns ; after which, the eldest of the family took a light, and followed by the rest, one of whom led

Adelaide, she opened a trap door, and began to descend a narrow staircase.

After going through what appeared a long passage, they entered a square cellar, the floor of which was matted, and a few seats distributed, but the air was damp and unwholesome, indicating that it had little or no outlet. It was, however, evident that this was the oratory, or chapel of the little proscribed church, which now assembled for the purpose of evening worship. Here, in simplicity and godly sincerity, prayers and thanksgivings were offered; and the stranger was received as a gift from God, whom, even in these days of affliction, it was their duty to accept, and their privilege to relieve. After this address to Heaven was concluded, the sisters joined in singing a hymn, the weak and broken voices in which it was uttered, the humble scene of their devotions, affording, in the eye of Adelaide, a strong contrast with the sweet and even heavenly expression, which, in despite of time and sorrow, illumined their countenances.

A cleanly bed, a deep sense of Almighty goodness in the kindness and protection thus afforded, enabled our weary and anxious traveller to sink into the sweetest sleep she had ever experienced; and when she arose, the female habiliments, which were laid by the side of her mattress, were a source of the highest gratification to her, and for the first time since her arrival in France, she felt as if she had the right of claiming the goodwill and assistance of those who could respect her intentions, and feel regard for her person.

CHAP. VII.

And then a thousand deaths at once advanced,
And every dart took place—all was so sudden,
That scarce a first man fell : one but began
To wonder, and straight fell a wonder too ;
A third, who stoop'd to raise his dying friend,
Dropt in the pious act. Heard you that groan ?

DRYDEN.

WHEN Adelaide descended, she found all the party engaged in deciphering the letter of

Annette Crebillon, which had been purposely rendered mysterious—a considerable portion of it being written in bad English, which she alone could explain. The letter proved of great importance, particularly in the present season of scarcity, since it informed the sisters “that much treasure, consisting of plate and other valuables, was hidden in the house formerly inhabited by M. Crebillon, being his stock in trade, which he had neither in his power to sell, nor even to give to his friends, at the time when the murder of his sons, and the consciousness that his own life was sought for, obliged him to fly.” This property was undoubtedly the principal cause of his continual anxiety to revisit Paris; but as his affectionate children regarded the idea with horror, they had at length persuaded him to renounce it, and with them to give up whatever could be regained to these sisters, as the only persons left, in their own country, to whom they were tenderly attached, and from whom, in return, they intreated protection for their beloved *protégée*.

It so happened, that the dwelling of

M. Crebillon, like that of many other houses which had been stained with innocent blood at the massacre of St. Bartholomew, had remained untenanted till it had fallen to decay, and became only the casual residence of beggars and thieves, who prowled about the city the greatest part of their time; and this family, whom the present distress had reduced from affluence to poverty, immediately conceived that the stranger could, in the boy's apparel, readily obtain the help they needed so much, and they now hailed her visit as the immediate gift of Heaven, with tears of gratitude and pious joy.

When, after many discussions, they at length sat down to a scanty meal, which had been purchased by some valuable moveables, the stranger was regularly introduced to the members of the community. Madame d'Aumont, called "the Mother," was a venerable woman, nearly eighty, but in full possession of her faculties, and, until within a short time, of her senses; but at this time had nearly lost her sight. Her eldest daughter

was a single woman, named Matilda.—The widow of a son, who perished with the Admiral Coligny, was the next person in point of importance, and though about fifty, was still called “Young Madame.”—Two sisters, distant relations of the Crebillons, named Agatha and Louise Duchesne, who had lived in monastic retirement from infancy, completed the little circle, which had formerly consisted of twelve.

“And what is your name, my dear child?—in this letter you are only termed Jaques.”

“It is Adelaide.”

“Adelaide! how strange!” observed the sisters, looking at each other; and soon after it appeared that this was the name of her who was the general mother; and Adelaide had already found that the solitude in which these sisters lived, rendered even the commonest occurrences *strange* in their eyes. She was diverted from the circumstance by observing one of them leave the room with a portion of food in her hand, with which she departed to a distant part of the house,

which was a large irregular old building, capable of containing many more than its present inhabitants.

This day and the next were given to conversing on the escape, the difficulties, the sufferings, and finally, the success of the Crebillons, together with the still more interesting subject of the English church, and the privileges of the Protestants: the leaves of the Holy Scriptures rescued from Adelaide's dress became a treasure of inestimable value; and to gain from her a translation of their contents, was an employment so interesting as to suspend all other, and render them almost forgetful of the wants of nature; and it was not till the pale features of Adelaide reminded them, that for her sake they addressed themselves to the pressing consideration of their wants.

Even in this short period, the evils under which the city groaned had increased most alarmingly; and Henry IV. foiled in his attempt to reduce Rouen to obedience, was now on his way to besiege Paris, by all the united means of destruction usually employ-

ed for this purpose ; but yet anxiously desirous of conciliating, rather than subduing his people, and deploring the distress their obstinacy compelled him to inflict.

The Duke de Nemours, within the city, supported by all the strength of Spain, prepared the means of resistance, and aware that famine would be eventually that kind of siege most likely to subdue the city, apportioned the food to be purchased in the smallest rations possible for sustaining so extensive a population, and of course the price was fearfully enhanced by all the retailers ; and our little family, exhausted of property wherewith to purchase, became eager to avail themselves of the hidden gifts of the Crebillons.

In such deep retirement had the sisters lived for many years, being regularly accustomed to purchase their provisions at their garden-gate, and receive the profits of their labours in the same way, that nothing less than absolute want could have driven them again into the world. It was, however, necessary that they should show Adelaide the

way ; and having done so, she found, to her great satisfaction, that the house where the treasure was concealed was a part of that line of buildings by which she had entered the city, and therefore, if her guide was indeed true to his promise, she would be enabled to gain food and the means of payment within an easy distance of each other.

As soon as she had reconnoitred the building, which was at no great length from her home, the sister, who had been her guide, returned thither, and Adelaide ventured to explore the ruined buildings, where she feared every moment to meet the marks of former violence or of existing ferocity. She had taken with her the means of striking a light ; and as soon as she had ascertained, from the perfect silence of the place, that she was indeed alone in this desolate scene, she ventured to light the little torch with which she was furnished, and to proceed on her search.

So accurate had been the description of the place by Annette Crebillon, that when she arrived at the kitchen where the dry

well was, into which the things had been thrown, she found no other difficulty, save what arose from an accumulation of dust and rubbish, which proved satisfactorily that this part of the building had been unexplored. But long and severe was the labour to the delicate frame of Adelaide, who was frequently obliged to sit down on the heap of rubbish and moveables which obstructed her progress, and often would she think that were it not for the hope, though distant, of finding a relation and friend in the Count de Soubise, it would be folly for her to struggle for prolonged existence; for the more she thought on the subject, the more she was convinced that her mother, if she survived the massacre, had fallen a victim to the sorrows or the hardships of later years.

The sense of compassion, and of duty also, urged her to do her utmost for those who had so kindly received and tenderly cherished her; and under this invigorating principle, after long toil, she succeeded in uncovering the well, and then descending a few steps, by the means of the rugged sides,

she soon found property far beyond her expectation, and, to her inexperienced conception, far more than she could ever need;—feeling, however, in her own exhausted state, the full value of riches as the means of bread, she fell on her knees in the midst of this singular and deplorable scene, and most devoutly thanked the Almighty Father, who had thus spread her table in the wilderness of life.

Adelaide now rose, and taking a piece of plate, which though heavy, was portable and easily concealed, she covered the rest as well as she was able, and proceeded with cautious and lagging steps to deposit it in the place agreed upon, conscious that she could gain no advantage till the following day, and that even her account of her success, to the sisters, must be burdened with the secret of “how she had disposed of her plate!” and secrets are ever painful to the ingenuous confiding minds of youth; and she returned home faint, weary, and unhappy, to those who were now almost without the means

of giving even the coarsest sustenance to nature.

Happily for their present feelings, as well as for their higher hopes, these pious sisters received the affliction as one sent from Heaven; and although they deprecated the folly and obstinacy of their present rulers, and would have rejoiced to see the King enter the city, yet they considered that all afflictions are trials permitted by God for the chastisement of his creatures, to which they are bound to submit. In this pious spirit, pale and resigned, their scanty morsel was equally divided into eight portions, two of which they insisted on Adelaide accepting, on account of her youth and her labour—one was again taken to the unknown guest; and though unable to sing, they yet joined in prayer and thanksgiving.

Adelaide could not sleep, and she crept out early to learn the fate of her deposit, and with joy the famishing alone can conceive, found a package of dried corn and a bit of salted flesh, and with this she soon

gladdened the hearts of the sisterhood, whom she observed to be speaking with an air of satisfaction, on some subject, when she entered, but which the more welcome sight she now offered induced them to relinquish.

For many days, in silence and secrecy, Adelaide continued to extract, from this repository, certain articles by which she gained scanty, coarse, and sometimes even loathsome provisions, but which were thankfully eaten in the present scarcity—a scarcity, which every day and hour served to increase. During her melancholy perambulation, she saw, with equal compassion and horror, the progress of famine in this populous city. All sounds of gaiety, all steps indicative of pleasure, or of business, ceased; then came funeral trains, followed by living corpses, who could with difficulty drag their weakened limbs after the bodies of their dearest connections. In a short time followed spectacles far more appalling; the dead, or dying, were no longer revered; the ties of nature were dissolved; and insatiate hunger arose to mad-

ness: the living first envied the dead, and then preyed upon them.

At length, to such a horrid degree of ferocity did want compel the people, that this most revolting of all expedients became organized, and, by the advice of the Spanish Ambassador, the bones of the dead were pounded into a kind of paste, with which the living were fed; but of all the wretches who partook this detestable food, not one survived; dreadful retchings, excruciating pains, succeeded the short relief, and a terrible vengeance, in a few hours, reduced them to that state they had thus horridly endeavoured to elude. In one short month thirty thousand of the inhabitants of Paris died from want of food, or its immediate consequences, although, like the Jews of old, every means of help was resorted to, and even mothers preyed on their own children.

Day by day the food obtained by Adelaide grew less and less, and at length ceased altogether, although there was still considerable property with which to purchase more; but riches were useless—every blade

of grass, every leaf on the trees of their little garden, had been long since stripped; and the smaller twigs afforded all the sustenance they now had. On the first day it was prepared, the good old mother died, and on the following morning the youngest person in the house, except Adelaide, departed also; it became the great object of the survivors to guard their remains, and they resolved to inter them both in their own garden, when the hour of darkness enabled them to do it unobserved.

For this purpose Adelaide and Madame d'Aumont employed themselves, in the dusk of the evening, in digging a grave, which, in the weak state to which they were reduced, was a work of great labour, and which they wished to make deep enough to conceal both the bodies effectually. When they had penetrated a considerable way, they were sensible of refreshment from the smell of the moist earth, and they both almost involuntarily put it into their mouths*, and soon

* It is a fact, that persons perishing of hunger have been thus supported for many days.

found that by sucking it they obtained considerable nourishment. This discovery they immediately communicated to the two sisters in the house, who availed themselves of it; for although prepared to die, and willing to follow the friends they mourned, yet nature prompted them to allay the torment occasioned by insatiate cravings.

As soon as this distressing labour was completed by the weak hands to which the task was assigned, Matilda and Louisa having decently sewn up each corpse in wrappers, they proceeded to carry amongst them the beloved remains to the last awful home. When they returned to bring the latter body, which was that of the general mother, another female appeared leaning in a melancholy attitude over it; and Adelaide felt assured this could be no other than the person to whom a portion of their food had been so regularly carried.

Her figure, though miserably wasted, was yet elegant, and there was evidently an air of superiority about her, which even the grand equalizer of the times had not been

able to subdue, and at any other time she would have been an object of the highest interest; but Adelaide's mind was no longer affected by objects of common curiosity, and her strength was so nearly subdued, that all she wished was to share the envied repose of the pious woman, on whom she was now closing the grave. More alive to what was passing around than the rest, she was aware that bands of soldiers were hurrying to and fro in the city, that the spectral forms of the inhabitants were gliding about with more than usual solicitude, and that there was reason to expect an attack on the city, which would probably decide its fate.

When, on their return within, she communicated her observations to the family, they agreed to go down into the chapel cellar we have formerly mentioned, and there in prayer and meditation await the change that might ensue; and the stranger lady at this time accompanied them. They had remained but a short time, and had remarked the tolling of the midnight hour, when a loud discharge of artillery verified their con-

jecture that the city was stormed, and Adelaide, starting up, declared her intention of going upon the roof of the house and witnessing the success of the assault, which, as it was seated on rising ground, it was possible to do.

Madame d'Aunont said, "she would accompany her," and the stranger rose for the same purpose; but the other two laying hands upon her, by a kind of gentle force detained her, saying, "Sister, *you* must not—a terrible sight (and every sight is now terrible) will overcome you."

"Alas!" said she, "I have borne the worst: you know not, friends, the sights I have seen!—I have now nothing left to fear."

"True, sister," said Matilda, with a spark of that curiosity which even suffering cannot extinguish, "we know nothing of your history, save what old Louisa told us, that you were ruined, and lost your senses, at the great massacre—that for two years she had kept you in her little cot, and then finding herself dying, she consigned you to us.—

Alas! it is now ten years since, and in all that time, though you have been patient and silent, yet you never spoke a sensible word till within the last month, when it seemed the will of God that the poverty and misery which afflicted us should prove the means of restoring your senses."

Again, loud peals of artillery were heard—the ground seemed to rock beneath their feet; but Adelaide, gazing on the stranger, seemed incapable of moving, ere she had heard the reply of one so deeply interesting. The unhappy lady appeared in act to speak, but so inwardly agitated, that all the little circle gazed upon her, as fearing that life itself would escape her fragile form, before she had the power of revealing that information she desired to give;—at length throwing back her hood from a still lovely face, and swallowing a little water, she thus replied :

" The long period of which you speak is indeed, to me, as a disturbed vision, nor have I any other recollection of it, than that I wrought at the bead-work, which in my

infancy was taught me by the beautiful Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, when she came over to marry the king, and sometimes sung to my child.

“ But,” added she, with energy, and in a voice indicative of the deepest anguish, “ I now remember *all* but too well; and lest memory should again fail, or reason be again driven from her seat, listen to me, whilst I have the power to speak.

“ I am English by birth—my family is of rank; I married the Count de Soubise, who was murdered before my eyes; whilst my child—my only child——”

“ Mother! mother!—my own mother!” exclaimed Adelaide, falling at her feet, and clasping her hands round the knees.

Madame de Soubise clapped her hands in agony to her forehead, fearful that her malady had returned, and unconsciously was leading her into error; but the sisters united to assure her that the poor boy was indeed Adelaide, whom for her satisfaction they began to array as a girl, in the hope that the joy such a meeting promised might have its

proper effect on the heart of the long childless mother.

But again the horrid sounds of war broke on their ears, accompanied by a shock so severe, followed by the sound of falling chimneys, that every one, by a simultaneous movement, pressed to the place of egress ; and Adelaide, as the most alert, sprang forward, raised the trap-door, and perceiving fire above them, eagerly besought them to lose not a moment in escaping.

They rushed into the garden, and there perceived that the whole of that quarter of the town was on fire—that a mine had opened from below, from which sprang the devouring element, now blazing in proud destruction on every side ; peals of artillery pouring on the suburbs from ten different bodies, shook the very heavens ; shrieks of the burning and the dying rent the air ; and the terrified people, menaced with destruction above, beneath, around, knew not whither to fly, and increased their danger and difficulty, by the terror and perplexity which possessed them.

“ My mother ! my mother ! ” cried Adelaide, “ in what a moment have I found you ! ”

“ Ah, my child ! if thou art indeed *mine*, even this is less terrible than that in which I lost thee.”

As Adelaide spoke, she dragged forward her new-found parent, with a strength which appeared, in her weakened frame, almost supernatural, and, by her example and intreaties, all had got down into the open street ; but the two females, who had that evening each laid her last relative in the garden, turned, ere they fled, to gaze on a spot they expected to see no more. At that moment another terrible crash succeeded—the ground trembled—the surrounding buildings, the house itself they had just quitted, fell—they were both buried beneath the falling ruins.

Impelled by instinct, or directed by the numbers that rushed around (and whose meager forms, frantic gestures, and dishevelled garments, as they emerged from the blazing ruins, presented a lively picture of

all the imagination can pourtray of souls in a state of punishment), the remains of the family at length attained an open square, at a distance from the conflagration, and there, from the observations made from the towers of a church, learned the actual situation of the besieging army. At this time ten of the suburbs were in the hands of the King, and the troops by attack and mine were storming the city; on every side terrible firing was directed against the city, which yet repelled the invaders with spirit and ability; and the thick clouds of smoke, the bright sparkles of fire from either army, rose in terrible array on every side, threatening to render the whole of this mighty capital the grave of its inhabitants.

Henry, from the heights of Montmartre, beheld the devastation, and, unable to endure a sight repugnant to his wishes as destructive to his subjects, commanded the thunder of the artillery to cease, and determined to trust to time and other means for the accomplishment of his wishes; he even gave orders that provisions should be secretly

conveyed into the city, and a respite granted to the suffering inhabitants.

Far from considering this mercy as indicative of good disposition in the King, the governors of Paris deemed it a proof of weakness, and determined on prolonging their resistance. For this purpose, the Duke of Nemours commanded, "that all useless mouths should be immediately turned out of the city," and the wretches, whom the sufferings of the night had spared, were condemned to new horrors in the morning. The Prince of Parma was now expected daily in the vicinity of Paris; and in the hope that he would give Henry battle, and pour relief into the city, the governors risked the total ruin of its inhabitants, and beheld, unmoved, those horrors, which unnerved the hand and melted the heart of their generous assailants.

CHAP. VIII.

Trust a boy's word, Sir, if you please, and take
My innocence for wisdom.

DRYDEN.

WE now return from the contemplation of leading historical facts, to attend the particular fate of poor Adelaide, her mother, and Madame d'Aumont, who, all three, spent the rest of this terrible night huddled with numerous other wretches, many of whom were expiring of famine, aided by wounds, which the night air rendered more intolerable, and whose groans and dying convulsions gave new horror to their situation. As soon as the proclamation of the governor was known, many of these wretches crawled away, and endeavoured to return to their own houses, or those of their relations; and so strong is the love of *home*, that even those most bereft of hope, yet felt the command

which drove them to perish on the outside of the gates, as an act of the severest punishment. Our three helpless females, houseless, friendless, and almost expiring with hunger, were not of the number, and they willingly went forward, as fast as their feeble limbs allowed, towards the place where they expected indeed to die, but to die in peace, which, in this scene of useless clamour, invective, and complaint, was impossible.

Though our friends were among the first who passed the gates, yet, when they had gone a short way beyond the barrier, they gave way, and suffered the long line of miserable females, wretched infants, and infirm old men, who constituted the “useless mouths” of Paris, to pass forward; and at the first spot where they could sit down on the fresh earth, and avail themselves of their yesterday’s expedient, they did not fail to use it, and with that, and a little water scooped in their hands, obtained at least the power of consoling each other—a power long denied to their parched lips and enfeebled frames.

Adelaide, as soon as she was able, began

to prove her own right to the endearing appellation she had used, and lamented that she had never been able to recollect her mother's family name of Shirley, which, indeed, it was probable she had seldom heard, as her grand-uncle died the year after his niece's marriage. She observed, "that an old gentleman of that name lived at Isleworth, whom she had frequently seen with my Lord Bacon," and her mother was soon assured that this gentleman was doubtless her uncle; and she expressed, as well as her weak state would permit, a wish that she could return to her native country, and enjoy his protection, as the only relation she had left.

"But there is yet a Count de Soubise, mother! Is he an uncle of mine?"

"There is no such person; your father was an only son, and his father must ere now have paid the debt of nature, even if sorrow for the loss he experienced did not facilitate his end."

"But yet there is such a person, for I have seen him. I have even received kindness at his hands; he is a man advanced in

years, but of a good countenance : would I could see him again !”

“ He is, doubtless, one whom the King hath rewarded with the estate and title of my dear husband,” said Madame de Soubise ; “ but it signifies not now, the hand of death is upon us : we perish, my child.”

As the poor lady spake these words, she cast on her daughter a look so full of tenderness, so indicative of her belief that she was indeed her child, and at the same time so full of melancholy, that poor Adelaide felt inspired by love and sorrow, to risk every thing for her relief.—“ Do not, do not die, dear mother ; bear up your spirits a little longer, and I will go directly to the King’s camp and demand an interview with this new Count : I will tell——”

“ Alas, my child ! thou wilt fall by the hands of the soldiers ; thy wretched appearance will not entitle thee to an interview with a superior officer.”

“ Oh, no ! they will not injure me* : the

* Historical fact. Henry forbade them to be touched : he observed, “ they had suffered too much already.”

whole sad train with whom we set out, have passed the barrier in perfect safety, as you may perceive, mother; besides, I have another friend in the army, the young Baron de Rosny, and all the English in the camp are as my countrymen."

"Then go, in God's name," said the feeble woman, imprinting a kiss on her wasted cheek; and Adelaide rising, endeavoured by the energy of her spirit to supply the little strength which remained to her. The road towards that part of the encampment occupied by the King was entirely rising, a circumstance which greatly increased her difficulty, and she had not proceeded far before she became sensible that she should never reach it.

On every side she beheld the terrible consequences of the last night's engagement, in the suburb through which she was passing, and which was now in the hands of the besiegers; but she also saw various proofs of humanity offering from the soldiers to their suffering countrymen; and on perceiving one of the latter, whom, from his garb, she knew

to be English, pour out a little wine from a flask to give a dying man, she cried out with a last effort, and in his own language, "Oh, comrade ! friend ! countryman ! spare me a little also : in mercy give me a drop."

"That I will, my poor lad," said the soldier, flying to her relief, moved less with her sorrows, perhaps, than the accents of his native tongue.

Adelaide had sunk on the ground, and the man had poured the last drop of his nearly-empty flask down her throat ere she had power to speak again ; the few words she uttered moved him to new exertions, and leaving her, he sought, at the risk of punishment, for farther relief among his companions, several of whom accompanied him, bringing with them such portions of food as happened to be spared from their rations. One of these had been "orderly" to Captain Latimer, and he eagerly cried out, that "This could be no other than poor Master Jaques, who was bleached fair with being starved to death, but whom he had believed to be murdered long since."

Adelaide, with a ghastly smile, held out her withered hand to the serjeant, and told him "he was right," as well as she was able.

"Well, to be sure! here's a sight!" said the poor fellow, as the tears gushed into his eyes—"to think that a bonny boy, used to English manchets and beer, should be reduced to this! But cheer up, my boy, I will carry you on my back to our general: and see here, I have got a fine thing in my pocket, which once belonged to you, I take it, and will serve to buy you many a dinner."

To the astonishment of Adelaide, he drew her long-lost bracelet from his vest. The joy she experienced at the sight of it, considered as the means of establishing her identity in the eyes of the King, added to the good she had received from her slight, but great refreshment, enabled her to arise; and her eager inquiry of "Where did you find it?" was uttered with a voice of pleasure.

"As to find it, I came by it this how; a

party of ours caught a fellow in the very fact of sending provisions into Paris, and were about tucking him up, but I interfered, and saved him for that bout; so he just gave me this'n by way of reward, and said, to tell the truth, he had cheated a youth out of it that he took to be English."

"Keep it," said Adelaide, "till I redeem it with English guineas. But I pray ye, in the first place, seek two women that are dying on the road below, and give them a morsel of sustenance; one of them is my mother—your countrywoman."

"There are hundreds of women dying for hunger, we have nothing to give them here; and besides, we may be summoned to our duty."

Adelaide briefly described those whom she meant, and the man, aware that she was, in his own phrase, "somebody," dispatched the first soldier, whose humanity had been already shown, on this errand of mercy, though with very inadequate means for its fulfilment; and then, with the aid of another, he began to carry the weary, famished wan-

derer to the tent of his own general, who, like the rest of his brave countrymen, had done signal service to the French King, and was of course a likely person to obtain immediate assistance from the court, for any person in whose affairs he was willing to interest himself.

At the present moment, this officer, with many others, was holding a council of war, in consequence of the success of the preceding night in their attack on the suburbs, and the increased distress which evidently prevailed in the city from the multitude of starving wretches who had been thrust out of it, and who were crawling forth to die in houseless misery.

The King declared again, that he could not endure the miseries under which the city of Paris groaned. "I am," said he*, "their Father and their King, and I cannot hear the recital of their calamities without being pierced to my inmost soul, and ardently desiring to bring them relief." But these generous sentiments were opposed by some,

* See Sully's Memoirs.

who, knowing that Henry was the lawful sovereign, and one who would not fail greatly to benefit his people, felt enraged at the obstinacy of the Parisians, and desirous of compelling them to receive their King.

Wearied with debate, and harassed by the difficulties of his situation, Henry walked out of his tent, followed by his principal officers, as if to contemplate better the progress of their arms against the mighty city, which lay stretched beneath them as one prostrate in her wretchedness, yet not humble in her adversity. On his right hand stood the Baron de Rosny*, not as Adelaide had beheld him a few months before, on his embassy to England, but pale from loss of blood, bandaged, and supported on crutches, though still bearing that firm, composed countenance, which bespoke a mind capable of deep consideration, and at once alive to the claims of humanity and the dictates of policy. Conscious that her recollection of his conversation with the Queen would enable her to prove to him that she had at

* See Villeroy's "Memoirs of State."

least the claims of a British subject in favour with her own court, Adelaide now requested that she might be set down, and then asking the serjeant to lend her the bracelet, she determined on presenting herself immediately to the attention of him from whom aid could be most speedily attained.

Adelaide was by nature modest even to timidity, and, unless compelled to action by circumstance, had ever found it difficult even to speak to strangers; and from such a presence as this, composed of the majesty and nobility of France, without the countenance of a single female, she would in happier days have shrunk abashed. But now, reduced to a state of weakness, which made life hang on a thread so feeble that a breath might dissolve it, and conscious that her mother, so long sought, so lately found, was similarly situated, she felt that not a moment must be lost—for her parent's sake she sought only to expend her fleeting breath, and offer up her last entreaties.

A wide circle, formed by the guards, under the direction of the subaltern officers,

inclosed the ground on which the King appeared, whose form and dress were well remembered by Adelaide; she would have been glad to have avoided the royal eye, but, as the Baron de Rosny was close to his ever gracious master, it was impossible. The beating of Adelaide's heart, the increased trembling of her limbs, induced her to fear she should die ere she reached the spot.—“ Ah,” said she to herself, “ this must surely be death; for why should I be thus agitated in appearing before an earthly monarch, who may so soon be called to appear before the King of kings?”

Turning her dazzled eyes around, and sensible that every person was regarding with wonder an object so mean and miserable, she endeavoured to end the overpowering solicitude of the moment by quickening her steps; but this her feebleness forbade, and stretching out her arms, she could only call out to the Baron de Rosny ere she sank upon the ground.

That great man, suspecting some harm meditated against his royal master, hastened

towards her as well as he was able, and eagerly inquired—"Whence art thou?—what is thy request?"

"I am from England, and the Queen, my mistress, will be thankful for my protection."

"Art thou not from the besieged city?"

"Yes! I sought my mother there—and—I have found her: we are driven thence, to our joy."

The King advanced, and pointing to the wasted form, the skinny lips, the pallid face of Adelaide, as she lay on the ground before him, adverted to the state of the city whence she came, and the tears of deep compassion for a creature so young, and of late so beautiful, rolled down his cheeks: he eagerly commanded food to be given to her. But the cautious statesman continued to interrogate her until she had convinced him that she was, indeed, in the confidence of the Queen of England, by repeating some of his own words, on which he gladly suffered refreshment to be administered to her, and

directed that she should be raised, and presented to the sovereign.

“ Oh, sir,” said Adelaide, “ in memory of our early sorrows and early friendship, commend me to his Majesty yourself.”

“ I know not to what you allude, my boy,” said the Baron ; “ but I will speak to the King in your behalf most willingly, if it be needful.”

“ When in that dreadful massacre you fled to the good Father la Faye, who protected you, there was a little girl also saved from destruction.”

“ There was—I remember her well.”

“ I am that unfortunate child,” said Adelaide, the little blood which remained in her extenuated form rushing to her pale cheeks.

The King and his nobles now crowded around her, and Henry, in a tone of tender compassion, and with that air of frank affability which endeared him to all his subjects, inquired—“ And whose child art thou, that hast already drunk so largely of the cup of sorrow ?”

“ I am, my liege, the only child of Charles Count de Soubise ! Perchance your Majesty may remember me from this circumstance, that, on the evening of St. Bartholomew, your royal consort clasped with her own hands this ornament, the gift of the Duchess of Guise, around my neck.”

“ By St. George !” exclaimed the King, “ we remember it well ; no share of that night’s occupation can be forgotten, when the gay wassailing of a luxurious court crowned its festival by draughts of blood—when we ourselves*, after escaping from the assassin’s poniard, were led up through long files of soldiers whose pointed spears menaced instant death, and compelled to witness sights more horrible than death—the sufferings—the extermination of those we loved and revered.”

The sovereign ceased, but the deep sigh of sympathy ran from breast to breast, and a long pause ensued, from which Henry starting, as one that must not recollect, as if to relieve his mind from the agonizing me-

* An historical fact—See De Thou, Sully, &c.

mory of the hour, eagerly raised the trembling suppliant at his feet, ordered a litter to be prepared for her removal to the suburbs, and comfortable lodging to be provided; then turning, he inquired "how she had left England, and whether she had ever heard of her parents?"

Adelaide in a few words informed him of her destination to Rouen, and the death of Captain Latimer.

"Merciful Providence!" exclaimed the King, "then it was for you, unknown, save by the help that weak arm administered, that De Soubise begged from me the standard so soon deserted: know, my little runagate, that you were sought, with no small anxiety, all over the plain on that ill-fated day: to this moment you are considered an object of interest to De Soubise, who regrets the boy that Heaven placed in his way, to heal the wounds of a long-widowed heart."

"I thank his compassion. Pardon me, sire, if I entreat to know who it is on whom your Majesty has bestowed the title? and——"

“ It is,” said the King, “ Charles de Soubise, the man who at the sound of our consort’s voice sprang from his bed, and received a deep dagger-wound in his side, which bathed him in blood, and left him apparently dead ; but being afterwards found with a crucifix round his neck (hung there by the playful hands of his child) he was considered a Catholic, and given in charge to some monks, who succeeded, after a long interval, in curing him—it is, Adelaide, *my* faithful friend—*your* father.”

Adelaide heard no more—her senses were overpowered, and it was with difficulty that life was revived ; but as during her state of insensibility the Baron had declared “ that she asserted that she had found her mother,” and the sergeant who carried her confirmed the report, messengers were dispatched to succour the long-lost Countess, whose recovery (should she be indeed saved) was earnestly desired by the King, who, from all he witnessed in the deplorable state of his suffering subjects, now determined to act on the suggestions of his pity, and to raise the

siege. Under the active care of the many who loved the long-suffering Count de Soubise, (whose wounds still confined him in the neighbourhood of Rouen), his wife and daughter were soon placed in comfortable apartments; a physician constantly attended on them, and administered to them portions of food and restorative medicines proper for their debilitated state.

As soon as poor Adelaide's senses returned, and she began, though slowly, to comprehend the miraculous change which had taken place in her affairs, it was her first care to mention the dreadful privation of reason under which her unhappy mother had laboured so many years, and which had occasioned the total loss of her society to her bereaved husband, and her own ignorance of his restoration. This was a point of the last importance to attend to, as there was but too much reason to believe that a sudden transition of feeling might again endanger the awful visitation under which she had suffered so long. Happily, from the kind consideration and ceaseless cares of Adelaide,

this effect was prevented, and she slowly gained health and powers of mind together, the strength of her affection for her child partaking the same gradual and happy progress.

Madame d'Aumont had, during her long sequestration from the world, ever been her favourite attendant among the sisters ; it was therefore a happy circumstance for her that she still beheld her near, and that in the anxious gratitude she experienced towards one whose family had nourished her in pure Christian charity for so many years, she found a new motive for self-exertion, as well as a nurse to whose gentle authority she had been long accustomed to submit. Adelaide, blessed with youth and native energy, full of gratitude to God and man, was much sooner restored to the blessings of health than either of her companions, and every vestige of returning strength in them was to her a source of unspeakable delight ; but yet her heart was often heavy, for the distresses of the country every hour pressed on her sight ; and her desire to see

and be recognised by her father, and to make his existence known to her mother, continually burdened her heart, and occupied her thoughts unceasingly.

CHAP. IX.

Oh ! if thou art the same Egeon, speak,
And speak again unto the same Emilia.

SHAKSPEARE.

AT this eventful period, the Great Henry gave the most decisive proofs of that wisdom, which was in him no less remarkable than that wonderful courage and persevering resolution, which in all his historians have formed the chief subject of eulogy. Having determined to give battle to the Prince of Parma, a great and skilful general, advancing against him with all the power of Spain, he gave secret orders that every soldier in his army, and every person connected with them, should hold themselves in readiness to leave the suburbs in which they were now

placed, at a moment's warning, fearful lest any small portion of them might, after his removal, become the prey of the populace. Grieved for the continuance of a civil war fraught with so many miseries, he hoped by a decisive victory over the Prince, to prove to those cities in open rebellion that it would be their wisdom to submit; and thus the effusion of blood would be spared, and the country return to that state of legal submission and civilized manners it had lost so long.

Taking in at once the most important concerns of a mighty empire, and the minute circumstances of private life and individual good, his capacious mind, aided by his wise young minister, the profound De Rosny, directed in all its movements the machine of a government disorganized in all its parts, and suffering in all its members. Agreeably to the commands so necessary for their own safety, our little family were compelled to leave their present abode as soon as it was possible; and Adelaide by that means obtained her wish of being removed at least

into the immediate neighbourhood of her father, and being so placed that she could learn the progress of his health, and perhaps administer to it. Although the high regard and gratitude they all felt towards the King, rendered them deeply solicitous for his welfare, and even desirous of being near the royal person, yet they were all sensible of much relief to their spirits, in proportion as they removed farther from the scene of their past sufferings, and were relieved from the sight of persons and circumstances which reminded them of the sorrows they had shared; yet tears, bitter tears, trickled down every cheek as the last view of the towers of Paris faded from their eyes—tears due to the memory of those dear and virtuous friends so lately entombed in its walls; and it was long before they regained that tranquillity, which each endeavoured to display for the sake of the rest.

As they travelled by slow degrees, and rested at those towns only which were secured to the King, the governors of which paid them the respect to which they were

entitled by the escort with which their royal protector furnished them), several days had passed before Adelaide found herself in the place she so earnestly desired to reach. This delay was, however, one by no means to be regretted, as it tended fully to establish her confidence in the state of her mother's mind ; and she had the sweet satisfaction of finding that change of scene, and even the variety of persons with whom they were occasionally associated, had always the most beneficial influence upon Madame de Soubise. She was now enabled to inquire with the most affectionate interest into the past concerns of her daughter's life, and never failed to express the most lively gratitude towards all those who had been instrumental to her good. She spoke also of her own intention to proceed to England, as the only place where she could now feel that she had a certain home ; and observed one day, that if she should not be so happy as to find her uncle alive, she should be satisfied to live with the Crebillons.—“ If,” said she, “ even in those days when my reason was alienated, and my

mind harassed with the image of my husband murdered before my eyes, and my poor child for ever lost, I yet could occasionally employ my hands to good purpose, how much more shall I be enabled to perform under the restoration of so many blessings!"

"Oh yes! my mother," said Adelaide cheerfully, yet with great trepidation, "we shall do very well, even if the King should forget us, or be unable to remit us the assistance to which his noble nature will prompt him. I doubt not but the Queen herself will purchase the product of our labours, and assist us till our country is restored to peace; in fact, I am certain, dear mother, we could not only do this, but even support my dear father if we had him with us."

"Support *him*!" cried Madame de Soubise, with enthusiasm, "ah, yes! for him I could work, beg—nay, starve again. Oh! Adelaide, poor girl, never can I convey to thee an idea of the excellence of the father thou hast lost; the sweetness of his temper, the kindness of his heart, admit no parallel; I speak not of

his courage, his honour, for those qualities he shares with many."

"Well, I trust I shall see him, and know him yet. You, dear mother, were restored to me by miracle; for what less can I deem the circumstance of our being brought under the same roof, living there unknown to each other for weeks, yet never meeting till that precise moment when the knowledge of each other was necessary to give each a stimulant for preserving life? Besides, there have been many wonderful escapes from that scene of slaughter."

"There have," said Madame d'Aumont, "for I have witnessed them; and I have also heard of one person, who, after appearing dead many hours, crept out from under a heap of slain, with seven severe wounds, and now lives; of another, who owed his safety to the circumstance of his wife having thrown a counterpane around him, by which the vital spark was preserved, notwithstanding he lost such a profusion of blood, that he from that time looked pale and wrinkled as if with age."

“ Did you, indeed, hear of such a thing ?” said the anxious wife, “ and are you sure the person lives ?”

“ I am certain he lived a little while ago, but was a sufferer from wounds gained in service.”

“ Then I will seek him all over France—no place shall be left unvisited, though I crawl upon my knees to find him. Adelaide, my child, that sufferer was undoubtedly your father ; the circumstance is fresh in my memory of rushing forward to screen him from his pursuers by that very means : my child, my friend, promise me never, never to abandon the search.”

“ We will not,” said Adelaide, trembling at the wild eagerness which rose in her eye ; “ and we will prepare to enter on this important duty by humiliation and prayer.”

The next day, finding the spirits of her mother much more composed, and her whole mind bent on this pursuit, Adelaide left her under the care of Madame d'Aumont, saying, she would visit the neighbouring chateau, where a wounded officer then lay, to

prosecute the inquiry. She was well aware that her anxious father, informed by the King of her existence, was then in daily expectation of seeing her ; but as he was yet a stranger to her mother's existence, and a deep mourner for her loss, she felt that the same affecting duty remained to be performed, which was to prepare *him* for a re-union so singular, unexpected, and delightful. The Count de Soubise, recovered from his wounds, but still weak from their effects, was slowly pacing the long avenue which led to the Chateau des Boix, where he had remained since the siege of Rouen, continually on the watch for the arrival of the interesting stranger, whom he still held in his eye as the dark handsome boy, who had rescued him from destruction, although he longed to find in him the daughter to whom his widowed life would owe its only solace. When the litter which conveyed Adelaide arrived within the avenue, and she perceived the Count, whom she instantly recognised, she caused herself to be set down, and sprang forward to throw herself at her father's feet, and en-

treat his blessing, fully persuaded that he was expecting her. The Count perceiving an elegant fair young woman, looking older than the boy he was watching for, in the first moment started back with an air of disappointment; but the moment he heard her voice, he approached, gazed with eager, delighted, yet somewhat mournful looks upon her countenance, then clasped her in his arms, and wept upon her neck, crying—“Thou art indeed my child—my own Maria’s child; and it was her dear voice, from thy lips, that touched me even in the field of battle. Oh God! I thank thee for this hour!”

Adelaide wept also, but they were the sweetest tears that she had ever shed; for far different was this meeting to that of the awful hour which restored her mother. She went with her father into the chateau; and having taken some refreshment, consented, at his earnest request, to tell him the sad story of her short existence, from the dreadful hour which divided them, to the present moment. When she arrived at the time when she discovered her mother, she spoke

of her, “ as an unhappy woman, whom the shock of seeing her husband murdered on the horrible night of St. Bartholomew, had deprived of her senses, and whom——”

“ Ah !” cried the Count in great emotion, “ I should not wonder, Adelaide, if thy own angel mother had been all these years in some such situation ; for even at this moment her terrific shriek, as that of sudden distraction, rings in my ears : and when, after my long confinement, I was at length enabled to creep out in disguise, and make inquiry, I could never learn that a person answering her description had been actually found amongst the murdered. Alas ! I was compelled to quit Paris, and having at last rejoined my King, it has never been in my power to renew the search ; it is possible that she still lives and suffers—a thought so terrible, my child, that even thy presence cannot render it endurable.”

The Count arose, and in great agitation traversed the apartment. Adelaide could not bear to see him suffer, and she was thankful that the same extreme precaution was

not in this case necessary. Rushing to his arms, she cried—"Oh! my father, calm your fears, my mother does indeed live—her senses are restored—she suffers no longer!"

But Adelaide had reckoned too much on the strength of her father's mind, manly and lofty as it was; the sudden revulsion of feeling, the excess of joy, the relief from a perpetual pressure of many years, was too much for him: in his convulsive gaspings and violent agitations, the terrified girl beheld her error, and she eagerly summoned all the assistance in the chateau, crying out in agony, "that she had killed her father!" The physician ordered the Count to be conveyed to his couch, and to lose a little blood; but in a short time he was relieved by tears, and that outpouring of vehement praise to Heaven, which at once bespoke the fulness of his happiness, and gave vent to the overpowering emotions of his swollen heart.

Under the violence of these transports, it became of use to the Count to learn the necessity of curbing his emotions, and the delicate state in which his beloved Maria was

still placed. He also reflected on the state from which his daughter was so lately rescued, and saw with pain how much she still suffered from her sympathy with him ; and his pleasure was controlled, by learning that Madame d'Aumont had dispatched a messenger to bring her back, who said, " her mother could not bear so long an absence." They eagerly concerted together a little plan, whereby he could once more embrace his long-lost wife ; and the Count then, though with great reluctance, agreed to Adelaide's departure for the night ; but ere she went, he read a letter from the Baron de Rosny, which she had been charged to give him, only in case she found him in tolerable health and capable of removing.

This letter contained not only the permission, but the commands of his sovereign (most graciously expressed), that he would remove to England with his wife and daughter, as the only medium of obtaining restoration of health to the former, and preserving or regaining her maternal rights of fortune to the latter. A letter was inclosed from

the King, whereby it was not doubted that the property confiscated by Queen Mary, which of right belonged to Madame de Soubise, would be restored by Queen Elizabeth, who had appointed commissioners to inquire into all such matters some years ago.

The Count immediately gave his most unqualified assent to this command, adding only, that “if ever his health and strength were restored, it would be at the service of his beloved Monarch;” and he told Adelaide that “he would immediately order all his affairs so as to enable him to proceed on his journey,” whilst she on her part as eagerly asserted, that “she would prepare her mother for the happiness which awaited her;” and she departed, most thankful that the poverty which, in despite of her hopes, she had often dreaded for the sake of her parents, was thus happily obviated.

“Have you received any tidings, my Adelaide?” were the first words of Madame de Soubise.

“Yes, mother, and they are most favourable to our hopes.”

“ The servants told me that the Count de Soubise was at the chateau : as he must be an usurper, I feared you were in danger, and sent for you.”

“ But he is not, dear mother ; on the contrary, he is our friend, and willing to share his future fortunes with us, and accompany us to England, where his presence may greatly aid us in regaining your father’s forfeited estates.”

“ Heaven bless and reward him !” said the sufferer, as she piously clasped her hands upon her heart. “ But, Adelaide, will he first help us to seek your father ? for, now that I really conceive it is possible to be so blessed as to find him, be assured that I shall never rest till I have seen him.”

“ Mother, the Count is still more anxious than you ; he will not sleep the whole night, I will answer for it, for thinking on the subject ; and though he is still very weak, having been much wounded at the siege of Rouen, I should not wonder if we saw him here to-morrow.”

“ We will go to *him* : whoever he may be, he bears a name so honourable, so dear, that he cannot disgrace it by refusing me his utmost assistance.”

“ Be assured he will give it ; I know that he loves me already as a daughter, and it will not be his fault if I do not see my father before to-morrow night.”

“ To-morrow night!—what a thought ! but I will try to be calm ; do not alarm yourself, Adelaide ; I know to what your fears naturally point ; but I trust myself that the Almighty guardian, who has preserved me through so much, will not forsake me in this most awful hour.”

“ Have you any recollection of your father, my love ?” she continued.

“ An image of a tall, handsome man, with dark eyes like my own, floats in my memory : I remember that he used to sing to me ; that he was graceful, active, full of fire and spirit ;—the Count assures me, that my father, at present, is just such a man as himself ; so he is of course much altered, for

the Count is pale and old, walks a little lame, and is altogether feeble, but yet very prepossessing."

"I am impatient to see him, and to secure his friendship.—To-morrow! to-morrow night!"

During the whole night these emphatic words were on the lips of Madame de Soubise continually, and she could neither sleep herself, nor suffer her companions to obtain repose; but in the morning she willingly took the nourishment which they assured her was necessary, and even submitted to those improvements in her dress which they deemed proper; after which she peremptorily insisted on being carried immediately to the château, and introduced by Adelaide to the Count.

Their little journey was soon made; but when arrived at the mansion, so great was Adelaide's dread of the interview, so lively her remembrance of the Count's emotion the preceding day, that, as she looked at the worn frame and transparent skin of her mother, she felt as if her long-suffering spirit

would take its everlasting flight at the sight of her husband, and leave him more wretched than before; and in the distress she felt she burst into tears, crying—"Alas! alas! what have I done?" and sank on a seat oppressed almost to fainting.

The Count had indeed never slept, and, as soon as she was announced, he hastened to her, and entered the room at the moment his long-afflicted partner was in her turn consoling poor Adelaide, by beseeching her to compose her spirits, saying, "My love, you will not see your father till night."

"Yes! she will see him this moment," cried the Count.

"Where? where?" exclaimed the mother, as she turned towards him, revealing her fine, but pallid countenance, and the still graceful air of her slight attenuated form.—"Oh, sir! tell me, for God's sake tell me, where is her father, my own Charles?—say——"

She sank upon her knees—her hands clasped, her eyes fixed upon him, in that intense-ness of inquiry which amounts to agony, and

which proved that more than life hung upon his answer.

The distress of the affectionate husband was at this moment terrible : he beheld his long-loved and deeply-lamented wife still the same tender and faithful being he had ever known her ; and whilst he ardently desired to hold her to his heart, to mingle his tears and his thanksgivings to Heaven with hers, he yet feared to speak a word which might injure her, and tend to destroy his new-found hopes of happiness—he dared not even to speak again, lest she should recognize his voice too suddenly ;—in his embarrassment and trouble, he turned away his face and wept.

Adelaide, alike trembling for both, eagerly tried to raise her mother, and soothe her father's feelings. “ See,” said she, “ my dear mother, how much the Count feels for you : do not distress him by this posture ; he will bring us to my father, as soon as he sees that you are able to bear the interview.”

Madame de Soubise turned her eyes to Heaven, and in silence and deep devotion

preferred her supplication to Him who readeth the heart:—in a short time she arose, and advancing to the Count, said, in a low but calm voice, “ I am prepared to see my husband.”

“ But,” answered he, in a faltering tone, “ are you prepared, Maria, to see him aged, broken down?”

“ ’Tis Charles! my own Charles!—yes! yes! I see him—I understand it all—and yet I live!”

Our little party, thus happily and wonderfully restored to each other, remained for a few days at the château, to enable them to tranquillize their spirits, and prepare them to adjourn to another country; and poor Adelaide might be now first said to realize the happiness she had so singularly acquired, and to feel a sweet certainty that she had a right to expect the bliss for which she had suffered so much. During their stay, they had the satisfaction of learning that the King, although he had not yet come to any decisive engagement with the Prince of Parma, was every day gaining ground; that in

several engagements with the opposite faction he had been constantly successful, and had given such eminent proofs of personal courage and heroic daring, as to render him more than ever the darling of the soldiers and the admiration of his subjects. From all they could now learn, his progress in conquests was more than doubled in that which he made in the affections of the country; and they quitted France under the full and happy conviction, that in a short time all the troubles of that long-suffering country would be ended, under the paternal sway of a King whose character they honoured, and whose person they loved and revered.

Their voyage was stormy, and their landing of course uncheered by welcome; but the spirits of all the party soon rose: thankful as they were for their safe arrival, and feeling too rich in each other to want any additional blessing, save that competence which they trusted the equal laws of the British government, aided by the personal good offices of the Queen, would soon accord

them. Every step which brought them nearer to the metropolis—a journey which they prosecuted by the means of pack-horses, which they hired at Canterbury—showed them that spirit of improvement, and air of wealth, which could not fail to awaken sensations of pleasure in philanthropic bosoms. The Count and Madame d'Aumont could not forbear to dilate on the blessings of religious liberty, which, by giving energy to every spring of human action, converted an apparently cold, unfruitful land, into one vast garden, rendered the havens forests of ships, the towns marts of merchandize, and the people important, wealthy, generous, and happy; whilst their own lovely country, deprived of this great blessing, suffered unnatural barrenness, poverty, anarchy, and ruin. But Adelaide, and her mother more especially, felt too happy to join in conversation; they were full of thought, but also full of satisfaction.

When at length they arrived in London, they took up their abode for a few days at the Globe Tavern, in Fleet Street, to rest

and refit. It was the first care of the Count de Soubise, to get his letters presented at court; and as the Queen was again at Richmond, and all the females were impatient to proceed thither also, it was judged meet to hire a vessel at London Bridge, to transport them thither. All the way up the Thames, Adelaide pointed out to the strangers those objects most worthy of attention, viz. the Custom-House of this the greatest commercial city on earth;—the extensive courts of the Knights Templar, with their beautiful gardens and fine church, now inhabited by lawyers and private gentlemen;—the magnificent palace of the late Duke of Somerset, in the Strand;—the Savoy, where dwelt the Queen's favourite. Beyond these they saw, with reverence, the ancient towers of Westminster Abbey, and the great Hall, where the Sovereigns of England hold their coronation feasts;—then came Lambeth Palace; and a few miles onward, the Palace at Fulham, no longer mourning for the fall of its upright Bishop*, nor degraded by the bigot

* Ridley, Bishop of London, burnt to death at Oxford, along with Latimer, Bishop of Worcester.

who rose on his ruin. Splendid mansions, populous villages, wide parks, and fruitful gardens, adorned the banks on either side of the noble stream, which, in its calm majestic course, flowed, to an imaginative mind, in the quiet grandeur of one conscious of its surrounding greatness, and proud to bear on its glittering surface the riches and beauty of a tributary world.

Whatever was the pleasure with which the scene was beheld in the neighbourhood of London, it was greatly increased on their approaching immediately to Richmond; although the warm heart of Adelaide, anxious to reach the dear friends of her infancy, could ill brook the hindrance arising from the multitude of gay vessels of every description which covered the Thames from the ferry of Sion to that of Richmond, and which, as the river became more confined in its banks, prevented them from making way. This delay was soon compensated by learning that the present show on the river was a gala given by the City of London in compliment to the Queen, and consisted of a

boat-race, a miniature naval fight, and other divertisements on the liquid element. The boats were all filled with gay company, from the first ladies of the court to the spouses of the citizens and the damsels of the country, all arrayed in their holiday clothes, and exhibiting an example of comfort, and even wealth, down to the very peasantry, which could not be rivalled in any country in Europe. The vessels of the nobility, for the most part, were of a light form, resembling the Venetian gondola, and were generally covered with awnings and ornamented with silk curtains, or in some cases tapestried with Genoa velvet: but those which belonged to the different companies in the city were of a heavier construction, richly gilt, and painted in gorgeous colours, resembling those introduced by Claude and other painters as antique ships. Others were built to represent animals, and worked on the water in offensive or defensive warfare, to the infinite amusement of the crowd on the banks, and the people who filled the heavy barges or common wherries, which swelled and oc-

casionally interfered in the scene. Numbers of the boats were ornamented with branches of trees, on which hung garlands of flowers, gay streamers of silk and ribands: bands of music were stationed on every side, and morris-dancers with bells were interspersed, who danced on stages suspended between two vessels: every thing, as far as the eye could see, was full of gaiety and motion; the welcome of friends, the loud laugh of rustic enjoyment, the trolling of a mirthful song, the martial music of military bands, succeeded each other; while the soft perfume that was wafted from the lime-trees on the banks and the flowers in the vessels, aided to prolong the charm which everywhere feasted the senses.

The Queen was seen now to descend from her palace and approach her boat, on the middle of which an ornamented seat was raised, over which was a beautiful crimson canopy; from the edge silken curtains were suspended, which were looped up with wreaths of natural flowers, and on the top was a beautiful crown, made also of the

garden's loveliest productions. The ladies in attendance stood around, splendidly attired; and the whole formed a beautiful object, which was hailed with delight by all who beheld it. As the vessel moved slowly forward, every eye was strained to snatch a look of their beloved sovereign; and Adelaide felt as if she could scarcely refrain from crying out aloud, to thank and bless the royal hand which had led her through so much sorrow to so much happiness.

When the royal pageant was passed, our travellers had no difficulty in reaching the abode of the sisters Crebillon, who, with tears of delight welcomed home her whom they called their "wandering child." Their joy at seeing Madame d'Aumont, the friend of their infancy, was not less great; and the pleasure they experienced in using their own language in unrestrained freedom, seemed to make them amends for all the sorrowful news of which she was the bearer: but the presence of the Count de Soubise, and his still delicate wife, recalled them to recollection.

When this excellent couple had somewhat relieved their grateful hearts, by pouring out their thanks to this worthy family, they removed to lodgings, not choosing to be any restraint upon them; but Adelaide stayed a few hours to talk, as she was wont, to the old man, and relate how she had disposed of his goods in the day of her distress. He now sincerely rejoiced that he had not left his kind daughters, and was truly glad that he had in any way contributed to assist his aged friends in Paris, of whose sufferings they all heard with sincere commiseration. Adelaide next inquired after poor Captain Latimer's widow, and learnt that she had retired with her infant son to a distance, after returning from Calais, her income being very narrow. It was the first wish of Adelaide's heart to contribute to her assistance.

In the delight of her present situation, the poor girl now forgot that there could be any more trouble in the world. She found herself in the land of liberty and plenty, in the possession of the dearest ties of existence—

with friends who loved her, and, as she trusted, that royal patronage which could not fail to procure her every future blessing; and with all the sanguine expectation of youth, she ran from place to place, as if to call on every object, animate or inanimate, to partake her sensations.

The feelings of the Count de Soubise and his tender partner, though less openly expressed, were little short of those experienced by their beloved daughter; for so long, so severe, had been their sorrows, so completely had life been lost to the one and rendered wretched to the other, that they each felt like persons entering on a new state of existence, and prepared to consider that all was heaven around them. These emotions were felt most sweetly and sublimely, when, kneeling in the house of God, surrounded with a congregation whom they considered as their brethren, their full hearts poured out the tide of pious gratitude, and glorified the God whom they worshipped in simplicity and truth.

In a short time, however, they found the

necessity of looking into their worldly circumstances, and endeavouring to regain the property of Madame de Soubise's father. Unfortunately for them, the Queen was removing to London at the time when they arrived, and her return was delayed by some unpleasant affairs in Ireland; and as the Count spoke English indifferently, and was entirely new to the manners of the country, and the timidity and remaining delicacy of her health prevented his lady from any exertion, this important business again devolved upon poor Adelaide, who, although yet little better than a shadow, felt equal to every exertion, when the welfare of her parents was concerned.

CHAP. X.

—————Behold the ways
Of Heaven's eternal destiny to man !
For ever just, benevolent, and wise.

AKENSIDE.

It was the first care of Adelaide to inquire after Mr. Shirley, whom she remembered as living in the neighbourhood, and being the friend of Lord Bacon, with whom she had seen him frequently walk on the opposite banks of the river, planting trees, and forming walks in Twickenham Park. She found that the old gentleman had left that abode, for he was said to be "of a restless anxious frame of mind," and that he was then removed to Kingston; for her informer added, that "although he frequently flitted, yet he was too aged to go to any great distance."

It was not long before Adelaide obtained permission to visit him; and although he

was very infirm, and a little deaf, yet as she proceeded in the sad story of her unhappy mother's sufferings, he gave abundant proof that age had neither impaired his faculties, nor blunted his affections. He recalled all the early history of his brothers, the martyrdom of one, the exile of the other, and the long, long remembered flight of his little niece, whose loss he had never ceased to lament, as the sole survivor of a brother whom he had tenderly loved, and whose cruel death had yet more endeared him.

With such dispositions towards our wanderers, it was no wonder that the old gentleman soon received his niece, and offered in his house a welcome asylum to them all, until the settlement of their affairs. He had long felt himself a cheerless unconnected man, and contracted many of those peculiarities, which those who live much alone are subject to; but he was a person of great worth and generous temper; and he soon became so fond of Adelaide, and so pleased with her attentions to him, as an aged man .

and an invalid, that he could scarcely bear to be parted from her a moment.

Assisted by his counsel, his friends, and his purse, Madame de Soubise, under the just and merciful dispensations of Elizabeth's government, in the course of the following year recovered the property of her father, which had been confiscated at the time of his execution under the blood-stained reign of Mary. This property was more than equal to all the wants and wishes of the emigrant family; and by the time it was secured, the Count de Soubise had become so pleased with England, that he willingly acceded to the request of his wife and daughter, that he would purchase an estate in England, and live there for the remainder of his days. In doing this, the Count by no means renounced the country in which he was born, and the King he loved, for he hoped to revisit both; but he justly felt that the liberty of exercising his own religion, and living amongst those who professed a pure faith, was itself a blessing beyond all other, and the only one

which could atone to him for the sufferings he had endured from the Catholics.

Desirous of contributing by every attention in their power to the comforts of their declining relative, it was a particular object with them to find some spot in this neighbourhood in which to reside ; and Adelaide went with her father, in short rambles, through Twickenham, Hampton, East-Sheen, and Isleworth, for that purpose—all villages on the banks of the Thames, remarkable for their beauty and salubrity, and principally inhabited by nobility, officers, and those connected with the court. Often would she reflect on the great change which had taken place in her situation, since she used to wander alone in anxious musing in these paths ; and then she would press the hand of her beloved father to her heart, and casting her glistening eyes to heaven, breathe out her thanksgivings to the Father on high.

At length they removed to a large mansion, which had formerly been a convent, in East-Sheen, and which, in its extensive offices

and chapel, afforded a comfortable and separate abode for Mr. Shirley also, and a pleasant parlour and bed-room for their good friend Madame d'Aumont, who had been so long used to female society only, that she had hitherto chosen to reside with the Crebillons, in preference to mixing with an English establishment. It was the first care of Adelaide, on the accession of fortune, to fulfil her promise of assistance to Mrs. Latimer and her son, for whose future education her uncle had already undertaken; and it was her peculiar business, and pleasure also, to fit up these rooms with every little convenience and elegance, which would render them agreeable to the good widow, and afford the kind Crebillons a pleasant visiting-place, where they might find united the best characteristics of the land they had left, and the country they had found. For this purpose Adelaide rendered the place, as far as she was able, like the house which Madame d'Aumont had so long lived in at Paris, and caused a porch to be built in the same manner, near which she planted the most beau-

tiful flowers, training them to cover and encircle it.

Madame d'Aumont was delighted with this proof of kind attention to her comforts, and eagerly expressed her satisfaction; saying, "Ah, ma'mselle, every time I enter or quit my pretty home, I will think of you, and pray to God to bless you!"

"And every time," said Adelaide, "that I visit you, I will remember that wretched night, when I entered your porch, and sat down weary, hungry, poor, and houseless, ready to expire with famine and sorrow; and remember that not out of your *abundance*, but your *scarcity*, you fed me, clothed me, nourished me as a child, and confided in me as a sister; nor will I ever come out without recollecting that more wretched night still, when we were pursued by fire and sword—when the earth shook under our feet, and the heavens blazed above our heads—for that night gave me my mother."

So much did that mother feel while this conversation was passing, that the Count de Soubise, to give a little change to her

thoughts, and direct them all to the best tranquillizer, took her hand, and proceeded to the chapel, which was now divested of all its superstitious ornaments, and neatly fitted up as a room for family prayer. “ Here,” said he, “ can we, my excellent Madame d’Aumont, perform our devotions in our own language; and any of our countrymen willing to join us, shall have a double welcome, as Frenchmen and Protestants;—we shall not need to stifle the warm breathings of our hearts *here*, nor sing the praises of our God in a cellar.”

The party were called from this interesting conversation by a mandate from the Queen, who was again fixing her summer abode at Richmond, and now graciously offered an audience to the Count and his family, including Adelaide by name. The grateful girl had long wished for this opportunity of thanking the Queen, and sometimes grieved that circumstances had hitherto prevented her from enjoying, or even soliciting that honour; but she now sincerely rejoiced that it had not taken place,

till such time as the restoration of her mother's fortune had enabled the Count to appear in the presence of Elizabeth somewhat in the style suitable to his rank, and that she should be able to thank the Queen for *past* favours, without being compelled to solicit *new* ones. Young as she was, Adelaide was yet aware, that her Majesty would prefer spending that money which she considered the property of the nation, upon her own people, rather than those of another country, although, as a great Queen, she was ever willing to extend munificent aid on momentous occasions.

Once more, therefore, our young heroine appeared before this great princess, and had the unexampled gratification of presenting, not only the mother she had so intrepidly sought, but the noble father she had lost, to her whose subjects they were all become. The Queen received them all most benignantly ; and, after giving warm praise to the blushing Adelaide, and congratulating her parents on the possession of such a child, she proceeded to gladden the heart of the loyal

De Soubise by informing him, “ that since he had left France, success had invariably followed the arms of Henry IV. who had entered Paris, been received by his subjects with the warmest welcome, and might now be considered as established on the throne he merited so highly.”

Future accounts confirmed the important news thus condescendingly communicated; and in a short time afterwards the Count de Soubise visited his country, and had the proud satisfaction of being received by his own sovereign with the most gracious distinction, and being quietly put in possession of his own estates, together with royal rewards for his former services. The great Henry made the most obliging inquiries after Madame de Soubise and Adelaide, hoping that they had recovered their good looks, and did not retain the memory of their starving days in Paris, which he hoped they would one day visit, to witness happier scenes. With that gaiety of spirit, and condescending affability of manners, which endeared him to all who beheld him, he jested a little on poor Ade-

laide's desertion of her colours, and said, "when she visited his court, it would be his duty to make an example of her*;" adding, in a graver tone, "I have ever observed, that the firmest temper and the gentlest spirit are perfectly compatible; that sensibility and fortitude go hand in hand—I therefore doubt not, that Adelaide will henceforward be as much an affectionate and obedient, as she was once an enterprising and intrepid daughter."

* When Henry IV. was wounded by Chatelet, an assassin, who thrust a lance into his mouth with such violence as to dislodge one of his teeth, he pushed the wretch violently from him; who, finding his design discovered, fell on his knees, and confessed that he was employed by the Jesuits to murder the King.—"Ah!" said Henry, "I have heard the wickedness of the Jesuits from many mouths, but now I know it from my own." Six different conspiracies were detected against the life of this excellent King; and he was at last stabbed in his coach by one Francis Ravallac.

THE END.

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